



His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah bin Al Hussein, the Regent, Tuesday receives Bahraini Minister of Trade and Agriculture Habib Qassem at the Royal Court (Petra photo)

Prince Abdullah receives visiting Bahraini minister

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah bin Al Hussein, the Regent, Tuesday received at the Royal Court Bahraini Minister of Trade and Agriculture Habib Qassem, who is also chairman of the Executive Council of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) which opened its meetings in Amman Monday.

Prince Abdullah said Jordan has always been supportive of any joint Arab action aiming to serve the interests of the Arab nation.

The Arab nation, he stressed, requires every possible effort to ensure its progress and achieve prosperity for its peoples, particularly at the present stage when changes are sweeping the world arena.

Mr. Qassem on his part, thanked His Majesty King Hussein and Jordan for hosting the council's meeting in Amman and voiced pride in Jordan's pioneering role in supporting joint Arab action and solidarity.

The meeting was attended by the King's advisor Mohammad Rasoul Kilani, Agriculture Minister Mansour Ben Tarif and Ministry of Agriculture Secretary General Ghaleb Abu Orabi.

The AOAD Executive Council met for the second

day Tuesday and discussed a proposal to start presenting an annual award for Arab researchers in agriculture and irrigation-related fields.

The proposal was referred to the organisation's general assembly to decide on the issue of its next meeting.

The council then discussed

AOAD's 1994 financial and administrative reports presented by Director General Yahya Bakkour.

The report stated that the organisation's general assembly had decided to allocate \$6,445,000 for the organisation's budget this year and \$6,560,550 for 1996.

'Bahrain, UAE seek to advance ties with Jordan'

AMMAN (Petra) — Bahraini Minister of Trade and Agriculture Habib Qassem Tuesday described Jordanian-Bahraini relations as strong and distinguished at all levels, particularly in economic fields.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, on the sidelines of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) Executive Council meeting in Amman, Mr. Qassem said the trade exchange between the two countries was continuously growing and that it ranges between \$27-30 million annually, with some years hitting the \$35 million mark.

He voiced hope that this cooperation will strengthen in the future, noting that there was a strong desire by the two sides to activate their joint efforts in economic and trade fields.

He pointed out that the Jordanian-Bahraini joint committee will meet soon to discuss means of advancing ties.

He underlined that officials and delegations from the two countries always exchange visits and added that the Bahraini government was looking forward to a visit by Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb to his country in April when the Jordanian products exhibition will be opened in Manama.

Meanwhile, United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of Agriculture Saeed Raqbani, who is participating in the AOAD meetings, commended the pioneering agricultural projects in Jordan and the use of modern irrigation technologies. Praising Jordanian-UAE ties, he said his country was keen to enhance bilateral ties in all fields.

IAF calls on Algeria to release political detainees, launch dialogue

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF), which represents Jordan's mainstream Islamist movement, on Tuesday called on the Algerian authorities to release all political detainees and launch a national dialogue to settle the country's two-year-old crisis.

The IAF also offered its good offices to mediate among the conflicting parties in Algeria saying it was in the interests of the Arab and Islamic world to end the violence in the North African country.

The front also called on the Algerian regime to accept the results of 1992 elections, which the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win, but were cancelled by the army. The FIS was subsequently outlawed and many of its supporters jailed.

The army move sparked a deep crisis in Algeria, with FIS supporters and members of other militant groups taking up arms against the regime.

Up to 30,000 people, civilians, security forces and foreign residents, are believed to have been slain in the violence since then.

The IAF's call, contained in a two-page statement made available to the Jordan Times, came amid reports from Algeria that up to 800 militants were killed in a massive army operation against the dissident groups in the country.

The front's statement also came one day after senior Algerian delegation representing the National Transitional Council, which acts as the country's parliament after the army-backed regime cancelled 1992 elections, paid

a visit to Jordan seeking Amman's support for a national dialogue in the country.

"What is happening in Algeria now benefits nobody but the enemies" of Islam, said the IAF statement. "Those who have scored victories against the enemies also deserve victory against their own internal difference," it said in what appeared to be a reference to a reported infighting among the various Islamic factions in Algeria.

"We call upon everybody to shoulder their responsibility in a framework of ... Arab and Islamic brotherhood," said the statement.

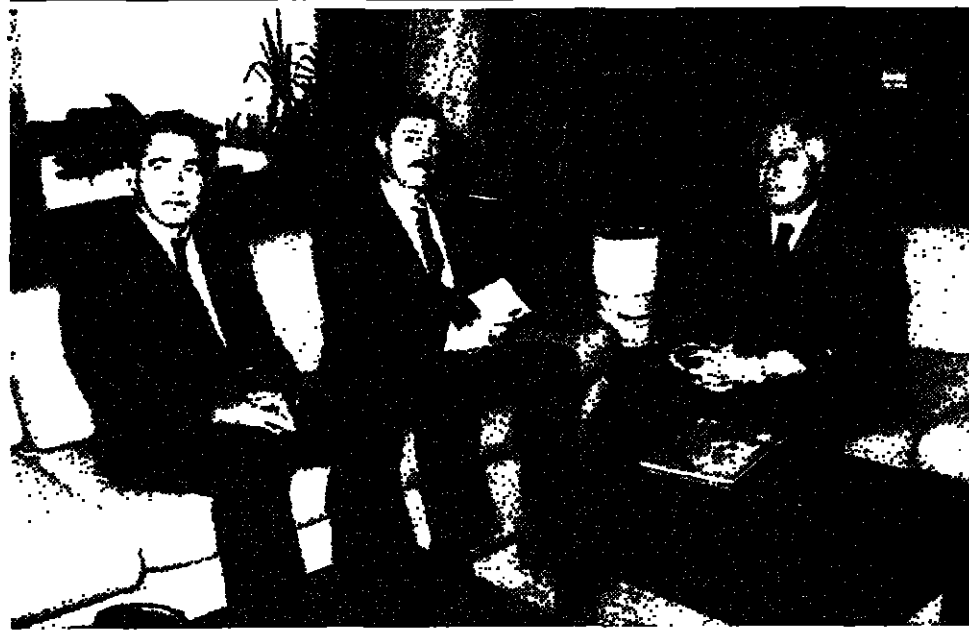
It denounced the army role in Algerian politics, saying the army's responsibility was to protect the country from external threats and not to get involved in internal politics.

It said Algeria should be allowed to return to its place in the Arab and Islamic nation and "the nation's uprising and in the continuing struggle..."

"We have to respect the minds and souls of our sons," said the statement. "We also caution our brethren in Algeria of foreign interference, particularly from France and the United States," it added.

The Jordanian party also offered its good offices to mediate the Algerian conflict.

"We, as an Islamic party, are ready to do what we can to get Algeria out of this crisis through meetings among the conflicting parties and attempts to convince them to accept a settlement that will unite the people and not separate them..."



Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat (right), French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Bajot (centre) and European Union Ambassador Yves Gazzo Tuesday discuss a planned water and tourism workshop (Petra photo)

Water minister, European envoys discuss water, tourism workshop

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat Tuesday discussed with European Union (EU) ambassador and head of EU delegation Yves Gazzo and French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Bajot the EU's contribution to financing water and tourism projects in Jordan.

Dr. Irsheidat said an agreement was reached to hold a

workshop in May on water and tourism in Jordan.

He said representatives of the private sector in Europe and the Arab World will be invited to take part in the workshop.

Dr. Irsheidat added that the EU agreed in principle to sponsor this workshop, which seeks to orient private sector representatives on investment opportunities in Jordan.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Irsheidat said France, which currently holds the presidency of the EU, has agreed to contribute one third of the costs of installing a 60-kilometre water pipeline from Adassiyah to Deir Alla.

The pipeline will cost JD 1 million, Dr. Irsheidat said.

'Social development ministries, foreign voluntary societies should coordinate work'

AMMAN (Petra) — Social Development Minister Salwa Damen-Masri Tuesday stressed the need for foreign voluntary societies operating in Jordan to present their annual budgets and plans to the ministry at the beginning of every year.

At a meeting with officials from these societies, Ms. Damen-Masri also underlined the importance of coordination between the ministry and the societies in their activities and projects and called for activating agreements signed between them, urging the societies to fully

adhere to them. She said any project or activity carried out by foreign societies should be approved beforehand by the ministry and that these projects be compatible with the goals of the societies.

The minister also called for developing the traditional activities of these societies, urging them to focus on income-generating and development projects.

Stressing that the ministry will support any feasible project or activity, she highlighted the importance of coordinating the activities of voluntary

societies and having them adhere to their annual plans and reports presented to the ministry to enable the concerned authorities to follow up and supervise these activities.

Ms. Damen-Masri also called for activating the role of a committee set up by the ministry and several societies to follow up these projects and to call for a meeting in the near future.

The meeting was attended by representatives of eight foreign societies operating in the Kingdom.

New Italian trade office works to promote joint ventures

By Beatrix Immenkamp
Special to Jordan Times

AMMAN — In order to boost commercial ties between Jordan and Italy, the Italian National Institute for Foreign Trade (INFT), also known as the Italian Trade Commission (ICE), recently opened its first office in Jordan.

A public agency operating in accordance with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Trade, ICE is primarily working to promote joint ventures between businessmen from both countries.

Samir Salameh, trade commissioner and head of the local office, told the Jordan Times that the commission's role in setting up joint ventures would not be confined to locating suitable partners in Italy, but also to help the venture approach financing schemes for the project itself.

Two sources of financing for joint ventures abroad exist in Italy, the European Community Investment Programme (ECIP) and the SIMEST.

According to Mr. Salameh, an essential component of a successful application for

financial assistance for the joint venture is a very good and very detailed feasibility study.

In turn, acceptance of the project by one of the financing schemes recognises the feasibility of the project, he added.

Other objectives pursued by the ICE are acquainting the Italian import market with Jordanian goods as well as promoting Italian exports to Jordan.

ICE disseminates information in Italy via a computer network, Telematex, and through its own weekly publication, "Sistema Italia."

Assessing the progress which has been achieved since the ICE office was opened in December, Mr. Salameh said that while some joint ventures were already in the making, only one serious request for supplying the Italian market with Jordanian products had come forward, namely for Dead Sea cosmetic products.

ICE organised a series of events during which participants learned more about the ICE as well as Italy's trade laws.

In cooperation with the Association of Manufacturers of Textile Machines in Italy (ACIMIT), an eight-member delegation of Italian textile manufacturers was sent by ICE to Italy late last year to assess the technology Italy could offer.

At present, the Amman office is planning to commission two studies, one on regional infrastructure and one on the potential of the Palestinian market for Italians.

The Amman office, a representative office of the ICE's regional office in Beirut, was opened in response to a request by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan during his visit to Italy in 1993.

The office, which is temporarily housed in the Italian embassy in Amman, will be responsible for Jordan and the Palestinian self-rule areas in Gaza and Jericho. Other regional ICE offices are located in Saudi Arabia and Tel Aviv. The ICE has a total of 81 offices worldwide, as well as 39 offices in the provinces of Italy.

Arab-Israeli committee to resume discussions on displaced Palestinians

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An Arab-Israeli technical committee will meet on April 7 to resume discussions on the fate of Palestinians displaced in the 1967 war, sources said Tuesday amid reports that Israel has drawn up a paper that categorises the displaced into eight groups and estimating their number at 500,000.

The sources, who preferred anonymity, noted that the first meeting of the foreign ministers of Jordan, Egypt and Israel and a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Amman on March 7 set up the technical committee which would discuss the modalities and mechanisms for defining and discussing the repatriation of the displaced.

The technical committee which represents all the four parties, will meet on April 7, but the venue for the meeting is not decided yet," said one source.

During the ministerial meeting in Amman in March, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres decided to acknowledge the right of the displaced to return to their homeland and spoke in general terms which shifted the responsibility for the displaced from Israel to the international community.

The Arab sides to the meeting described the outcome of the meeting as disappointing. Meanwhile, a report carried in the local press said Israel had presented a paper, prepared by former military intelligence chief Shimon Peres, that categorised the displaced into four groups.

The first four groups which are eligible for repatriation, according to the report, are: — Palestinians who were staying outside the occupied territories but were permanent residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This would include those who were working outside their homeland.

— Palestinians who left the territories with the Jordanian army in the 1967 war. — Palestinians who had permits to enter the West Bank and Gaza Strip but who decided not to go back. — Palestinians who left in the second half of 1967 — after the war — to join family members outside (who might have fled during the war).

The four other groups,

according to the report, are: — Palestinians who were expelled from the West Bank and Gaza Strip with a "security record" for anti-Israeli activities. — Palestinians displaced from East Jerusalem.

— Palestinians displaced during or after the war but whose homes are now occupied by settlers.

— Palestinians who lost their homes in Palestine when the state of Israel was created in 1948 and moved to the West Bank and Gaza but were displaced again in the 1967 war.

According to the report, the paper was prepared by Mr. Gazit, a former Israeli army intelligence chief. The report said the paper was signed by the Israeli side to the technical committee.

The report also said that Israel had indicated that the fate of the three groups in the second category could be subject to negotiation but there cannot be any repatriation of those in the first group of the second category — those expelled for anti-Israeli activities.

According to sources quoted in the report, Israel estimated the number of displaced — all groups included — at 500,000 compared with the Arab estimation of nearly 800,000 and all of them entitled to return home under the Declaration of Principles signed by the PLO and Israel in September 1993.

The fate of refugees from the 1948 war will be discussed at a later stage.

The sources reportedly said that Israel was suggesting a mechanism that would ensure the "gradual" return of the displaced in accordance with a "timetable at a rate of 4,000 per year in an orderly manner that does not adversely affect the security of Israel."

Omar Al Khatib, the acting Palestinian ambassador to Jordan, said the Arab list includes all Palestinians displaced from their homeland and that the Arabs insist that Israel respect the right of all of them to be repatriated regardless of any consideration.

Mr. Khatib also said that priority should be given to those who were living in the occupied territories after the 1967 war but were stuck outside while their permits expired. Jordanian officials estimate their number at between 55,000 and 85,000.

Mr. Khatib also rejected the yearly 4,000 figure reportedly suggested by Israel and said this should depend on the economic situation of the occupied territories.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Zarqa University renamed

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Council of Higher Education has decided to take the necessary legislative measures to change the name of Zarqa University to Hashemite University and thus change its law. University President Mohammad Hamdan Tuesday said. Dr. Hamdan said the university is expected to admit first year students next September in three faculties: Arts and sciences; administrative sciences; and educational sciences.

Tourism seminar targets Mideast

AMMAN (Petra) — Representatives of 11 Arab countries, in addition to the United States, Japan, Russia, France, Canada, Switzerland, Israel and the European Union met here Tuesday to discuss ways of advancing cooperation in tourism marketing and investments in the Middle East and North Africa region. Taking part in the two-day workshop, sponsored by the Japanese government, are delegates from Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman and Yemen.

194 exports rise 16%

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian exports to foreign markets in 1994 totalled JD 712 million, reflecting an increase of 16 per cent over the previous year, sources at the Amman Chamber of Industry Tuesday said. The sources said the value of re-exported commodities stood at more than JD 200 million. They said the Kingdom's imports dropped by three per cent.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

WORKSHOP

- ★ Workshop to acquaint children with museums with Ms. Nelly Lama at Goethe-Institut (4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.).

FILM

- ★ Film entitled "Howards End" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.

SECOND AMMAN DRAMA FESTIVAL

- ★ Two plays (in Arabic) entitled "Ghazir Al Leil" and "The Eyes of Maria and Shindad" respectively at 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture entitled "Les Minorites En Pays Musulmans, Identités Culturelles et Relations Intercommunautaires" by Madame Lucette Valensi at the French Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

POETRY AND NOVEL RECITAL

- ★ Poetry recital by Iraqi poet Kazem Al Kati' at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Novel recital by novelist Hashem Gharaibeh at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:00 p.m.

CONCERT

- ★ Concert by Mingo Seldivar and his band — Los Tremendos Cuatro Espadas (in a programme containing a variety of country and Latin American music) on Thursday at Philadelphia Hotel at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Hamoud Chantout at the Balqa' Art Gallery, Fuhels.
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Yousef Baddawi at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Ahmad Al Bahli and Mohammad Ali at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- ★ Exhibition of books dealing with Arab and Islamic subjects at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).
- ★ Exhibition of abstract art by 'Alia' 'Ammoura and oil paintings by Salman 'Abbas at Orfali Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Rula Shukairy at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of women's abstract artists entitled "The World Through the Eyes of Women" at Baladna Art Gallery.

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Forrest Gump dominates awards with 6 Oscars

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Forrest Gump, the story of an Alabama simpleton whose optimism propels him to fame and fortune, dominated the Oscars Monday, with six awards including best film, best actor and best director.

The film earned back-to-back Oscars for Tom Hanks — putting the 38-year-old in an elite crowd with five other actors — and gave blockbuster king Robert Zemeckis his first Oscar for best director in an evening that yielded few surprises.

The 67th annual Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences presentation handed veteran stars Jessica Lange and Dianne Wiest their second Oscars. Lange was honoured for best actress while Wiest took home the Academy Award for best supporting actress.

Martin Landau won best supporting actor, his first in a lengthy career.

The awards proceeded as expected with hundreds of women wearing some of the nation's most glittering finery and tuxedo-clad men looking on at the Shrine Auditorium here.

More than one billion people in over 100 countries tuned into the four-hour broadcast.

The results disappointed critics and fans who had hoped for last-minute salvation for dark horses such as Pulp Fiction, which entered the competition with seven nominations but left with only one for best screenplay.

Tales of underdogs coming out on top — one of Hollywood's favourite plots — proved hard to come by Monday as events unfolded.

Gump was a smash from the beginning with audiences and critics embracing it with abandon, eating up the syrupy-sweet optimism that its lead character thrived on.

It entered the contest with 13 nominations.

"I would like to thank motion picture audiences all around the world. In historic numbers you have embraced a film that at its heart offers a human, life-affirming, hopeful story," Director Robert Zemeckis said as he accepted

his Oscar.

Gump has earned nearly \$600 million worldwide, reportedly paying Hanks and Zemeckis roughly \$35 million each.

Gump stumbles through life comforted by such motherly platitudes as: "Life's like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get."

The dim-witted but emerges as a star athlete who goes on to win a football championship and meet President John Kennedy through a computer-generated exchange melding footage of Kennedy with images of Hanks.

Hollywood's nod to Lange, 45, for her performance in Blue Sky as a woman who falls prey to child-like emotions to act out her frustrations, cements her claim to fame as one of Hollywood's heavy hitters. Blue Sky won even though it sat on a shelf for four years after the company that made it, Orion, folded.

Lange's career bloomed in the 1980s. She won an Oscar for her role in Tootsie (1982), the comic story of a male actor (Dustin Hoffman) who dresses in drag in order to get an acting job.

Wiest, 46, played the comically aging, egocentric 1920s diva in Woody Allen's Bullets Over Broadway.

Wiest's win was expected since she took home the Los Angeles Film Critics Award, the New York Film Critics Award, and the National Society of Film Critics Award, all for her best supporting actress. She also won a Golden Globe.

Wiest's last Oscar victory came in 1986 with the best supporting actress award for Hannah and Her Sisters, another Woody Allen project.

The award for the 66-year-old Landau for best supporting actor in Ed Wood capped nearly 40 years of stage, screen and television acting.

His performance was the saving grace that put the box office bomb on the critics' map.

Even the Russians, who face tumultuous times at

home, were able to glean some Hollywood joy with their winning entry Burnt By The Sun, taking the best foreign language film Oscar.

As for the show itself, host David Letterman's remarks about how long and boring it was rebounded bitterly when his own jokes fell flat. The saving grace was a manic dog that chased its tale frenetically whenever anybody clapped.

It was the only real surprise of the evening.

"I feel as though I'm standing on magic legs in a special effects process that is too unbelievable to imagine and far too costly to make a reality," an emotional Hanks told the cheering audience in his acceptance speech.

"Believe me, the power and the pleasure and the emotion of this moment is a constant the speed of light," Hanks said, tears welling in his eyes. "It will never be diminished, nor will my appreciation and the meaning between two simple words that I can only offer you here: thank you."

Blue Sky took an unlikely path to the Oscars: It was shelved for three years because of studio financial troubles; its director, Tony Richardson, died before it was released, and it was a box-office flop despite good reviews.

"This is such a wonderful honour, especially for a little film that seemed to have no future," said Lange.

Just as Gump was favoured for the top awards, Lange, Landau and Wiest all had been expected to win in their categories. Landau was the only first-time winner in an acting category.

"God, what a night, what a life, what a moment, what everything," a teary-eyed Landau exclaimed, he thanked director Tim Burton for giving him "the part of my life" in the quirky film about Wood, a 1950s movie ranked affectionately by some as the worst director of all time.

For Wiest, it was the second supporting award. She hurried exuberantly to the podium and announced, as she began reading her



Academy Award winners, from left, Martin Landau, best supporting actor; Dianne Wiest, best supporting actress; Jessica Lange, best actress; and Tom Hanks, best actor, hold the Oscars they won at the 67th annual Academy Awards in Los Angeles (AFP photo)

acceptance speech: "This is as surprising and marvelous as it was the first time, although this time I need glasses."

Technical awards were spread over an unusually wide field. The Adventures Of Priscilla, Queen Of The Desert took the Oscar for costume design, Ed Wood for makeup. Speed for sound effects editing and sound, Legends Of The Fall for cinematography and The Madness Of King George for art direction.

Disney's The Lion King won best original score and the animated film's Can You Feel The Love Tonight? by Elton John and Tim Rice was named best song.

The theme of this year's Academy Awards was "comedy and the movies," because as show producer Gil Cates put it, "we can all use a good laugh... the world news has provided few amusements."

Some awards were announced in advance: Italian filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni received an honorary Oscar for lifetime achievement. Clint Eastwood was presented the Irving G.



Director Robert Zemeckis (left) holds the Oscar he won as best director for the film Forrest Gump as he poses with Steven Spielberg, who presented the award to Zemeckis at the 67th annual Academy Awards in Los Angeles 27 March. Forrest Gump won six Oscars, including best picture, best actor, and best director (AFP photo)

Thalberg Award for consistently high quality of motion picture production, and Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award.

Clinton embarks on longest trip of the year

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton embarks Tuesday on his longest trip of the year to date, a week-long jaunt to talk about economics, greet U.S. troops in Haiti, and visit with friends back home in Arkansas.

Mr. Clinton was to depart in late afternoon for Atlanta, where he will make evening remarks to the Atlanta Committee on Olympic Games that is preparing for the 1996 summer Olympics.

Joined by Vice President Al Gore and other top administration officials, he is to preside Wednesday over the Southern Regional Economic Conference, a seven-hour talkfest at Emory University that the White House hopes will show Mr. Clinton in a favourable light in the south, where he is unpopular despite his Arkansas roots.

The conference, similar to one Mr. Clinton held in Little Rock, Arkansas, after he was elected president but before he took office, is to review the regional economy, examine strains on working families, take a look at innovations in education and training and ways to invest in sustained growth and high-wage jobs.

It is to be the first of four such conferences the White House will stage across the country as the president heads into his 1996 re-election campaign.

Mr. Clinton is to make a campaign-style sweep through Florida Thursday — speaking to a joint session of the Florida legislature in the state capital of Tallahassee, then moving on to Tampa for an event, then on to West Palm Beach for the night.

The president flies to Haiti Friday morning to celebrate what has been a foreign policy success — the U.S. occupation of the tiny Caribbean nation to put back in power elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and plans to turn over peacekeeping to a U.N. force.

Mrs Clinton visits Mother Teresa's orphanage school

NEW DELHI (AFP) — U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton cuddled babies and sang with children at Mother Teresa's orphanage Tuesday on the first day of a visit she said would build ties of "friendship and partnership" with India.

Mrs. Clinton, who arrived here from Pakistan on the second leg of a 12-day South Asian tour, spent some 40 minutes at the suburban orphanage and announced that she would donate around 20 beds to the well-kept home.

"They are all very beautiful children," the wife of President Bill Clinton said after being draped with garlands of pink flowers by two girls. "It is very nice and beautiful. So peaceful."

Mrs. Clinton, who is known for her concern for women's and children's

issues, kissed and cuddled babies, lifted boys and girls in her arms and sang along with some children.

She walked around the complex slowly despite urgings by aides to hurry up, repeatedly folding her hands in greeting to the sisters of Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity who run the 35-year-old orphanage, home to 164 children, mostly under two years of age.

Mrs. Clinton, who was accompanied by her daughter Chelsea and a 15-member delegation, praised the work done by Calcutta-based Mother Teresa and the orphanage.

Sister Joann, the senior official at the orphanage, said Mother Teresa had wanted to speak to Mr. Clinton by telephone from Calcutta but missed her by a few minutes.

Clark attacks Kaelin; suggests Simpson fought with ex-wife day of murders

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Reprimanded by the judge for asking one inflammatory question, prosecutor Marcia Clark quickly popped another one Monday, asking whether O.J. Simpson argued with his ex-wife by the phone the day she and a friend were murdered.

Simpson's former housekeeper, Brian "Kato" Kaelin, insisted in his fourth day on the witness stand that he knew nothing about such a phone conversation between the Simpsons.

"Mr. Kaelin acknowledged Simpson was 'upset' when he arrived home from a dance recital by his daughter, Sydney, the evening of June 12. But under Ms. Clark's stern questioning, Mr. Kaelin had a difficult time explaining, in his words, the degree of 'upsetness'."

Asked by one of Simpson's lawyers to give jurors a better idea of Simpson's demeanor that evening, Mr. Kaelin, an aspiring actor, tried to play the part of a witness.

As if he were Simpson, saying "Nicole didn't let me see Sydney, I want to see my daughter. Oh, boy."

He spoke in a soft voice that he said reflected Simpson's demeanor. "The degree of upset, it's such a hard

thing," Mr. Kaelin explained.

Ms. Clark apparently startled the defence and Mr. Kaelin with the question about a cellular phone conversation she suggested occurred while Simpson was at the Riviera Country Club the morning before the murders.

Ms. Clark offered no evidence such a conversation had taken place and the defence objected to the question, setting off one of many long conferences at the judge's bench.

"Isn't it true, Mr. Kaelin, that Mr. Simpson told you he'd had a conversation with Nicole on his cell phone while he was at the Riviera Country Club in which he had had an argument with her?" Ms. Clark asked.

"No," Mr. Kaelin replied. After the bench conference, Ms. Clark posed her question about the phone conversation again, in two different phrasings, but raised no objections from the defence.

Mr. Kaelin was told to return Tuesday after his testimony was abbreviated by a bomb threat and a shortened court day. Court was recessed early so a juror, accompanied by a guard, could attend a funeral.

Murdered maid's body exhumed in Philippine probe

MANILA (R) — The Philippines exhumed the corpse of a murder victim Tuesday in a macabre twist to a dispute with Singapore over the execution of a Filipino maid.

President Fidel Ramos said public anger over the affair had put his own neck on the line.

The body of Delia Maga, to whose murder executed

maid Flor Contemplacion had confessed, was dug up at a cemetery in her home town of Victoria, 70 kilometres south of Manila.

About 100 people gathered around the grave, in contrast to the thousands who showed up Sunday to give Contemplacion a martyr's funeral in the town of San Pablo, just 30 kilometres from Victoria.

National Bureau of investigation (NBI) agents probed the skeletal remains with sticks and took a set of dentures, witnesses told Reuters.

Contemplacion, a 42-year-old mother of four, was hanged in Singapore on March 17 after confessing to killing Maga and a three-year-old Singaporean boy.

The execution provoked a diplomatic rift between the Philippines and Singapore after the island republic rejected impassioned Philippine appeals for a postponement.

Despite her confessions, many Filipinos believe Contemplacion was innocent and Mr. Ramos has ordered an inquiry into the case.

Italy police probe business motive in Gucci death

MILAN (R) — Investigators said Tuesday business deals may have been behind the murder of Maurizio Gucci, the former head of Italy's Gucci fashion dynasty.

They are trying to establish a motive in the killing of Gucci, 45, shot dead outside his office in Milan Monday by a well-dressed assassin who fled by car.

Public prosecutor Carlo

Nocerino, who heads the inquiry, said he also expected to travel to Switzerland, where Mr. Gucci was officially resident, to pursue his investigations.

Police believe the gunman, who was in his 30s or 40s, used a pistol fitted with a silencer.

"We are following every trail but the one which seems more probably is the trail

linked to the victim's business affairs. For that reason I also intend to go to Switzerland to carry out investigations," Mr. Nocerino told reporters.

Police Tuesday said they had developed a first identikit picture of the killer but needed to interview more witnesses.

They will include a guard at the building, Giuseppe Onorato, who is recovering

in hospital from a bullet wound to the shoulder. Mr. Gucci's first wife, Patrizia, has also been interviewed, police said.

Mr. Gucci sold his 50 per cent stake in the family business for a reported \$150 million to \$200 million in 1993 to the Arab investment bank Investcorp, which had bought out the half share held by his three cousins in 1987.



O.J. Simpson stands up to leave the courtroom in Los Angeles as Judge Lance Ito called an early recess as a result of a telephoned bomb threat. Behind Simpson is Deputy Sheriff Guy Magnara (AFP photo)

Ms. Clark, whose anger with her own witness was obvious from the outset, sought Monday to have Mr. Kaelin declared a hostile witness. The judge did not announce a decision in court, but UCLA law Professor Peter Arenella said it was obvious he granted Ms. Clark's request because she was allowed to ask more leading questions and the defence stopped objecting to them.

Meanwhile, legal papers

filed Monday by a prosecution DNA lawyer indicated that the vitriol being exchanged by opposing lawyers may merely foreshadow an even nastier battle.

Deputy District Attorney Rockne Harmon threatened to launch a personal attack on a prominent scientist if the defence calls him as witness.

Mr. Harmon said the opinions of Dr. Kary Mullis, who received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry for conceiving the

polymerase chain reaction process used in testing many DNA samples, are irrelevant.

The defence has suggested that Dr. Mullis will say he has reservations about the forensic applications of DNA testing in criminal cases.

Mr. Harmon said the prosecution would pain Dr. Mullis as a "longtime drug (LSD) user-abuser, a fact which he freely admits" and would show that he believes the HIV virus does not cause

Michael Jackson to play at Seoul Olympic Stadium

SEOUL (AFP) — Pop superstar Michael Jackson is expected to play two dates at the 70,000-seat Olympic Stadium here in October for his first performances ever in South Korea, a local promoter said Tuesday. The Taewon Arts Co. said it had obtained government approval for the concerts, part of an Asian tour to promote Jackson's new album Story Book. No firm dates have been set. Jackson had been scheduled to play in South Korea last year as part of his Dangerous album tour, which was cut short because of a scandal in the United States over allegations of child abuse. At that time, South Korea banned his entry, citing adverse effects on the country's youth and concern among parents over his "decadent" songs. The Yonhap News Agency said Jackson was expected to be paid about \$2 million for his two performances in Seoul, but spokesmen for the promoters could not immediately confirm the report.

Joan Chen goes into the perfume business

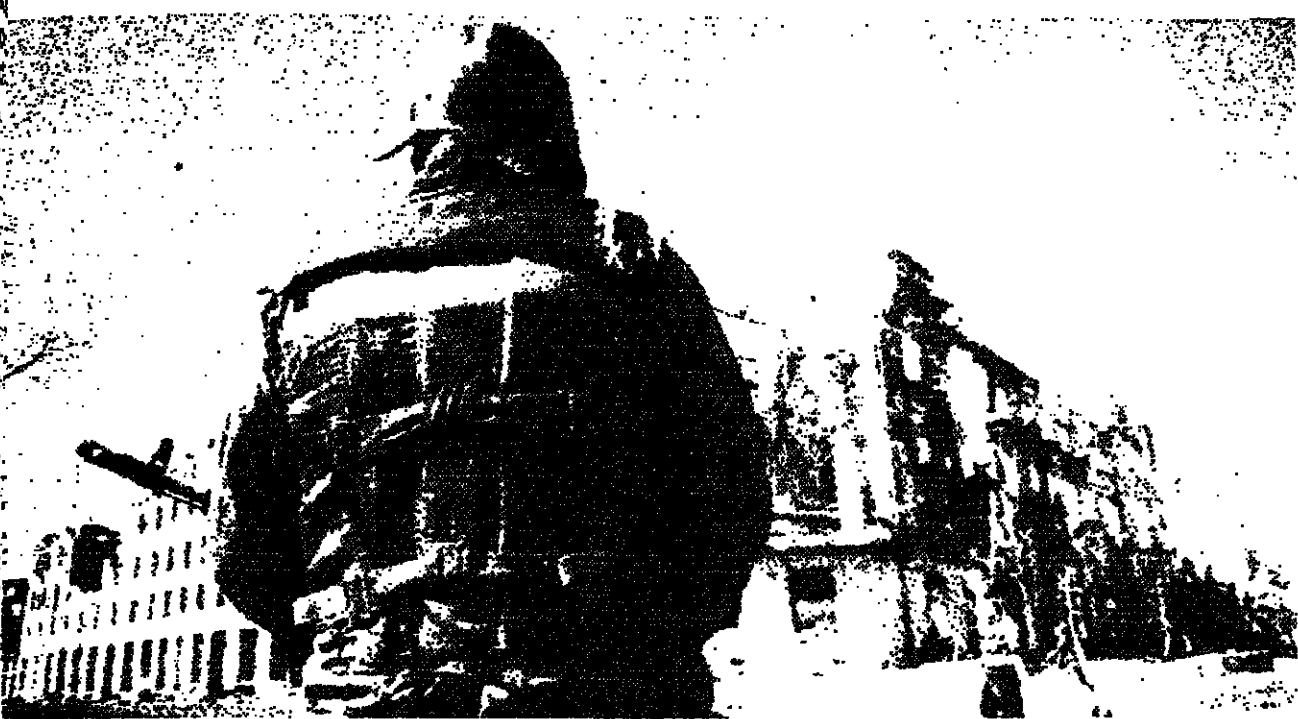
HONG KONG (AFP) — Joan Chen, star of Oscar award winning film The Last Emperor has become the latest Hollywood star to try her luck in the perfume business, a report said Monday. Her perfume is called Xiao Hua (Little Flower) the title of the first movie, made in China in 1978, in which she had a starring role. But the Chinese actress told the semi-official China News Service, that her first business venture, launched at the weekend in Beijing, was "still a long way from being profitable." Chen, who recently won Taipei's Golden Horse Award for best actress in the film Red Rose, White Rose, was on hand for the first sales at a Beijing department store. The Hollywood perfume market has become crowded over the years. Elizabeth Taylor, Joan Collins, Sophia Loren and Cher have all launched their own scents.

UFO buffs to see film of dead alien

LONDON (AFP) — A previously top secret film purporting to show U.S. scientists doing an autopsy on an alien creature nearly 50 years ago will be shown in August at a UFO conference, sponsors of the event said Sunday. U.S. Air Force officials shot the 91-minute film in 1947 in the New Mexico desert after a flying saucer crashed, said Philip Mantle of the British UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) Research Association. A former U.S. military photographer, now 82, made a copy of the film and gave it to a British documentary filmmaker he met in the United States, Mantle said. At one point the film shows U.S. scientists performing an autopsy on a "dead alien," Mantle said. Other footage in the black-and-white, 16-mm film shows the wreckage of the flying saucer. The screening is scheduled for August at Sheffield University in northern England during a two-day conference on UFO buffs. "We have already had the film checked out by Kodak, who confirm it is 50 years old, and we now plan to have it examined by film experts at the university," Mantle said. "This film has never had a public screening before in the world and is already creating intense interest."

Rich woman seeks sperm of brainy man

TAIPEI (AFP) — A rich Taiwanese woman has offered two million Taiwan dollars (\$76,000) for sperm so she can keep the family line going, the United Daily News reported Monday. The 29-year-old woman, identified only by her last name Chen, told doctors at Chungshing, south of Taipei, she had failed to get pregnant during three years of married life because of her husband's insufficient sperm, the paper said. She said pressure was mounting because there had to be a child to inherit the family fortune and carry the bloodline, as her husband was the only son of a wealthy family. Chen was looking for the sperm of a man with a doctorate or master's degree, "a decent job and carries blood type B", according to the paper.



Russian soldier patrols the centre of Grozny, as a young Chechen boy pulls his belongings. Thousands of people are returning to the capital which is a scene of almost total destruction following the month-long assault by Russian forces. The nearby, Chechen stronghold of Shali and surrounding villages were attacked by Russian forces with airplanes, helicopters and heavy guns (AFP photo)

Russians hammer Chechen stronghold of Shali

SERZEN YURT, Russia (AFP) — Russian forces attacked the Chechen separatist stronghold of Shali and surrounding villages with warplanes, helicopters and heavy guns Tuesday.

A 30-minute air raid by at least three jets followed an assault on the area by helicopter gunships and tanks and nightlong artillery exchanges.

However, there had been no major changes in either Chechen or Russian positions, said Rustam Idrisov, a fighter just out of Shali.

The planes dived about 20 times from high altitude, dropping bombs, firing barages of rockets and opening up with heavy machineguns before peeling back up into the sky.

There were occasional bursts of ineffectual return fire by Chechen independence fighters armed with automatic rifles.

The raid was aimed at Shali and the nearby villages of Gernemchuk and Avtury. The outskirts of Serzen Yurt, which lies on the heavily travelled main road leading into the Caucasus Mountains, were also hit.

After the raid, smoke could also be seen coming out of a village near the frontline just west of Shali, where Russian tanks are massed.

Three hours later, six warplanes circled high over the area and a village meeting, held to decide whether or not to resist the approaching Russians, had to be abandoned.

The planes then flew west and distant explosions could be heard.

Earlier Tuesday, there was a heavy engagement between

the two sides' big guns. Russian tank shells exploded every few minutes among buildings on the edge of Shali and along the road linking Shali to Avtury, sending up clouds of dirt and rubble.

Chechen forces fired on Russian positions with rockets and artillery from hills around Serzen Yurt.

Three Russian helicopters circled north of Shali, firing rockets and machinegunning the outskirts of the town and Gernemchuk and Avtury.

The yellow flashes of Chechen return fire at the helicopters could be seen coming out of Shali.

Lengthy exchanges of machinegun fire between ground positions could also be heard just north of Shali, where Russian tanks are also positioned.

The Russian offensive followed a night of almost unbroken artillery duels around Shali, which the separatists have declared the focus of their resistance to Russian rule.

"They're worse than the fascists. They'll kill us all, they're trying to wipe us out," said Yusup Akmadov, trouncing in an earth dug-out at the end of his garden in Serzen Yurt during the air raid.

"How can these damned pilots sleep at night, do they have children, do they have wives, are they human?" he asked.

The bombing and shelling signalled a major effort to crush resistance in Shali, which Chechen commander in chief Aslan Maskhadov has vowed to defend.

Once Shali becomes untenable, as even Chechen commanders admit it will, the separatists will retreat to the mountains to fight a purely guerrilla war.

Idrisov, a 20-year-old member of the separatists' elite Abkhazia Battalion, described the futility of holding out against the massive Russian firepower positioned in a semi-circle around Shali.

"Last night I lay in a hole in the ground like a rat. What else could I do? I want to live. This automatic (rifle) is almost useless. There are no people to fight out there, only machines," he said.

"All you get is boom, boom and three or four of the people near you disappear. There's just bits of their clothing, or their legs have gone," he said.

"In Shali, there's nothing to eat, nothing to drink, look how thin I am," he said.

"We'll have to go to the mountains, that will be much better for us," he said.

As a plane flew over, the said, "no problem, Allah is with us."

Mr. Maskhadov said his men could make the war a "nightmare" for the Russians in the Caucasus.

But thousands of refugees, from Shali and other places, are crammed into small mountain villages and the Russian Air Force has shown itself clearly willing to bomb civilians.

On Monday, Russian jets made a coordinated and massive attack on at least four refugee camps in Serzen Yurt and further south. The raids, in which planes bombed, fired rockets and strafed, killed at least nine refugees and wounded 23.

There were no signs of Chechen military activity at

any of the camps, where more than 1,600 refugees were sheltering from the war.

Tens of thousands of Russian troops poured into Chechnya on Dec. 11 to crush President Dzhokhar Dudayev's unilateral declaration of independence from the Russian Federation.

The Russian defence minister expected a quick victory, but despite an overwhelming advantage in terms of weapons, his men have met fierce resistance at every village and town.

The commander of Russian troops in Chechnya said Tuesday he would not hold ceasefire talks with rebels unless they laid down their arms and disbanded, Interfax News Agency said.

It quoted Colonel-General Anatoly Kulikov as saying at campaign headquarters in Mordok, just north of Chechnya, that Russian troops were continuing to break up rebel forces.

He said the rebels had lost most of their heavy weapons, their command structure had been disrupted and their reserves were dwindling.

But the Russian agency also quoted an unnamed high-ranking military source as saying Chechen forces were still holding out in the west of the rebel stronghold of Gudermes, about 45 kilometres east of the regional capital Grozny.

"The north and the south of the town is virtually completely blockaded, but from the western side the militants are resisting fiercely," it quoted the source as saying.

Russian forces planned to encircle Gudermes completely, "in the next few days," the source was quoted as saying.

Bosnian army, Serbs battle on, ignoring pleas to halt

SARAJEVO (R) — The Bosnian army and Serb forces battled across snowy ground to secure control of a key communication facility, ignoring international and U.N. pleas for a halt in the combat.

"It is our understanding both parties continue to opt for the military option," said U.N. spokesman Alexander Ivanko.

He told reporters in Sarajevo that both sides were refusing to meet and were setting numerous preconditions for attending talks with the United Nations on rescuing a four-month ceasefire blown apart by last week's Bosnian army offensive.

The United Nations says the eight-day offensive has won the Bosnian army ground in the Majevica hills to the east of Tuzla and on Vlasica Mountain which towers above the central Bosnian town of Travnik, a government stronghold.

Swedish peacekeepers reported artillery duels between Bosnian Serb and government forces Tuesday in

the Majevica region as both sides battled across snowy ground to secure control of a key communication facility.

Muslim forces say they have surrounded the Stolic Relay Station, which controls telephone traffic and television signals across much of the north of the country, and hope to persuade its Serb garrison to surrender the facility intact.

The Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA) said Serb soldiers had strengthened their positions in the Majevica area and telephone and television links running through Stolic had been repaired.

Fighting also continued on the Vlasica Plateau, the United Nations said, although restrictions on the movement of peacekeepers limited their ability to report on battlefield gains and losses, officials added.

A chorus of international calls for a halt to the fighting has gone unheeded.

The five-nation "contact group," struggling to find a diplomatic solution to the

nearly three-year-old Bosnian conflict, voiced concern at the deteriorating situation after a Monday meeting in London.

Officials from Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States agreed to keep up efforts to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table.

The contact group has been pursuing a two-pronged policy to end the war, trying to persuade the Bosnian Serbs to accept a peace plan proposed last July and encouraging rump Yugoslavia to recognise Bosnia and Croatia's independence in exchange for an end to sanctions.

Russia has been trying to speed up the lifting of sanctions and has pushed its Western partners in the peace process to adopt undefined new measures it hopes will help end the war.

"I hope the (contact) group will come up with a fresher and more active package of measures," Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev told reporters in

Moscow. The Western powers are reluctant to end sanctions on Belgrade quickly, fearing they will lose the only tool they have to lever Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic into pressuring Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia to agree to peace.

Shrugging off pleas to order a halt to the fighting, Bosnia's President Alija Izetbegovic said Monday Belgrade must recognise his country and the Bosnian Serbs must accept the contact group peace plan before peace talks can restart.

His government argues it must fight to regain some of the 70 per cent of Bosnia held by the Serbs since the international community will not force the Serbs to give up the land.

The Bosnian Serbs have refused to even discuss the contact group peace plan under which they stand to lose around a third of the territory they now hold. The Serbs made up about 30 per cent of Bosnia's pre-war population.

New Russian faction hots up pre-election battle

MOSCOW (R) — A new parliamentary faction set out goals similar to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's Tuesday, heating up a battle which is emerging for the central political ground ahead of elections.

The 37-member Stability Faction, holding its first news conference, identified its main aims as strengthening the state, improving law and order, raising living standards and stabilising the economy. All are policies promoted by Mr. Yeltsin.

The group made clear it would seek to win over moderate and pro-reform voters in December's election to the State Duma, the lower house, signalling a challenge to two other newly-created groups and the established centrist parties.

"The first decade of democratic transformations in Russia is coming to an end, it has been a period of chaos,"

Alexei Alexandrov, Stability's coordinator on political affairs, told the news conference.

"The country needs stability. Everything has got mixed up — empty promises, a lack of responsibility, aggressiveness and ideological emptiness, we need a great, stable Russia."

Stability's leaders also said they backed Mr. Yeltsin's use of force to crush the Chechen independence drive, saying tough measures were justified because Russia's unity was threatened.

"Under the conditions, the president had to resort to unpopular measures," Stability member Viktor Mironov said.

Stability's leaders did not say who they would back in presidential elections next year. But their policies indicated Mr. Yeltsin was a possible candidate, although he has not said yet if he will run.

Stability, whose formation could strengthen support for Mr. Yeltsin in the Duma, is made up of deputies who have defected from other parties and includes few well-known faces. It has yet to select a leader.

The Duma passed an election law last week, making few changes from the law for the last election to the chamber in 1993, and informal election campaigning has already started.

Ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party, which won almost a quarter of party-list votes in the 1993 election, is expected again to be backed by people who are unhappy with reforms. Communists could also mount a strong challenge.

The reformist camp is in chaos, particularly because the Chechen campaign has divided opinions in the leading liberal party, Russia's

Choice. This could leave many votes up for grabs among the moderate, centrist voters.

Two parties were formed last month to try to cash in on the chaos at the centre of Russian politics.

Alexander Yakovlev, once a member of the Soviet politburo, has launched a Social Democratic Party and former Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov has created the centrist Forward Russia.

Mr. Yakovlev has won public backing from Yeltsin aides trying to boost support for the president after the Chechen debacle. Those aides are also thought to have helped instigate Stability.

Mr. Fyodorov currently appears a less likely ally for Mr. Yeltsin but has made clear he is aiming to win over middle-of-the-road voters by pledging lower taxes and higher living standards.

U.N. conference opens with climate warnings

BERLIN (R) — The United Nations Tuesday opened an 11-day international conference intended to find ways to combat global warming and avert potentially catastrophic changes in the climate.

The Berlin conference, with more than 1,000 delegates from at least 128 countries, is a follow-up to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro and hopes to establish a basis for cutting man-made emissions into the next century.

"The peoples (of the world) expect us to take the decisions necessary to protect them from the harm that threatens," German Environment Minister Angela Merkel, elected conference president, told the opening session.

"We carry responsibility not only for today's generation but also for those of the future," she said.

Ms. Merkel cautioned against waiting for science to abolish remaining doubts about the effects of global warming.

The U.N.'s own inter-governmental panel on climate change has forecast a dramatic rise of between 1.5 and three degrees centigrade in the Earth's surface temperature next century if mushrooming industrial emissions are not cut.

"If we don't take action, we must expect grave and irreversible consequences a rise in sea levels, a shift in climate and vegetation zones and a deterioration in food production and the world nutrition situation are only a few examples," Ms. Merkel said.

"If we wait until observable climate changes have begun, we will be stuck with them for decades... if we are serious about long-term change we will not be able to avoid radical changes in our pattern of consumption and production and in our lifestyle."

Some of the former fear their emerging industry will be throttled by anti-pollution measures.

Foreigners flee Burundi capital

BUJUMBURA (AFP) — Some 200 foreigners, mostly women and children, fled out of Bujumbura Tuesday for "holidays" abroad after a week of fighting between Hutus and Tutsis in the Burundian capital that saw up to 500 killed.

Many of the children were crying as they boarded the Air France chartered flight and adults said they were "heartbroken" at the thought of not being able to return.

Among those fleeing were 155 women and children from the 500-strong French com-

munity in this tiny central African nation. Their one-way tickets were paid for by the French government, but French Cooperation Minister Bernard Debre, who was at the airport, maintained: "There is no evacuation. The men are staying. There are women and children leaving on holiday. Can you imagine that we'd tell them: 'Yes, there's a bit of trouble in Bujumbura; go for a walk in the streets.'"

Nationals of Belgium, which has some 900 expatriates here, the United States,

Spain and Germany are making plans to leave in the next few days.

Many of the foreigners had been planning to return home for the Easter break (April 14 to 17), but their flights had not been due to start on April 1.

The special plane was requested after the violence that turned Bujumbura into a ghost town, sent tens of thousands of refugees fleeing towards neighbouring Zaire, and raised fears that Burundi would slide into full-scale butchery.

Japan police search mystery cult for bodies

KAMIKU ISSHIKI, Japan (R) — Japanese police penetrated deeper into the labyrinthine complex of a doomsday cult Tuesday in search of corpses and evidence that the sect was making nerve gas.

They were also reported to have tracked down a prime suspect in last week's sarin nerve gas attacks on Tokyo's subway, who was receiving treatment in a Tokyo hospital after exposure to the gas.

"The Aum Shanti Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect) has nothing to do with religion and it won't be long before we start finding bodies," a senior officer, who asked not to be named, said at the start of the seventh day of raids.

In six days of searching since March 22, police wearing gas masks and riot gear have found hundreds of tonnes of lethal chemicals, including all the ingredients of sarin, at the sect's sprawling complex at the foot of Mt Fuji.

Sarin was used in the March 20 attacks on five Tokyo subway trains which killed 10 people and injured thousands. The sect has denied any connection to the incident.

The officer did not say why police were looking for bodies, but newspapers have quoted former followers as saying they saw sect officials bury an unknown number of corpses in the cult's complex at Kamiku Isshiki, 100 kilometres west of Tokyo.

"There is a distinct possibility that we'll discover bodies close to the Sixth Satian before the end of the week," another police official said. The Sixth Satian, Sanskrit for truth, is the name given by the cult to one cluster of buildings.

Police, who called in military chemical warfare experts to help them search a large



Female members of the cult, the Aum Supreme Truth are blocked by riot policemen as they try to enter a building currently under police inspection in Kamiku Isshiki village. Police have found the bacteria, botulinus

bacillus that could be used in germ warfare at the commune, which is already suspected of having produced the nerve gas sarin used in last Monday's Tokyo subway gas attack (AFP photo)

area believed to be a laboratory, said they had impounded several sophisticated chemical and medical devices from the Mt. Fuji complex.

Police confiscated an advanced DNA device and 200 large containers of peptone, a solution used to cultivate bacteria and other microorganisms.

"So far we have found no chemical machinery or other items linked to the manufacture of biological weaponry," said a police spokesman, quoting Masahiro Terao, head of the Metropolitan Police Department's murder squad.

A high-ranking investigation source said the seized items could be used to make bacteriological weapons, but there was no evidence that the cult had actually been doing so.

The Yomiuri Shimbun said police had determined that a man still in hospital after

exposure to the nerve gas was a prime suspect in the case. He was seen leaving a packet from which sarin fumes seeped out inside a train, the newspaper said.

The Yomiuri did not give his name or say if he was linked to the Aum sect. A spokesman for the Metropolitan Police Department said he could not confirm the report.

The sect, led by elusive leader Shoko Asahara, has denied allegations of conspiracy to murder, abduction and illegal confinement which were the basis of the police raids.

Instead, the bearded Asahara has claimed he and his followers were the target of sarin attacks by the U.S. military, and said the chemicals found inside the sect buildings were used to make pottery and plastic goods.

Mr. Asahara has preached that the world will come to an

end in 1997. His whereabouts are not known and national police have asked 47 prefectural police chiefs to locate him, a move that stops short of issuing an arrest warrant.

In Moscow, the daily Izvestia said Tuesday a close aide to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin was among several senior officials who helped the Japanese Aum Supreme Truth sect to establish itself in Russia.

The paper said Oleg Lobov who is close to Mr. Yeltsin and is now secretary of Russia's powerful Security Council had intervened on behalf of the sect and its guru Shoko Asahara at the end of 1991.

At the time, Mr. Lobov was looking for cash to finance a Russian-Japanese university in Moscow. Izvestia said that about this time, Mr. Lobov contacted the Japanese embassy asking it to help arrange a meeting for him with Mr. Asahara.

Some of the former fear their emerging industry will be throttled by anti-pollution measures.

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Prevention better than cure

AT A time when the rich nations find it necessary to cut down social services due to budgetary constraints, the poor countries are coming under increased pressure from their peoples to seek and develop new revenues to provide non-existent services. What stands out most in this context is the medical bill that countries have to bear. In the industrial world national medical insurance has almost become a basic right. But due to the increasing cost of health programmes, many developed states are now turning to preventive medicine as an effective means to cut the price tag on medical expenses. Preventive medicine is surely less expensive than treatment. If peoples were told how to lead a healthy life and how to protect their environment, diseases like heart attacks or cancer could be greatly diminished and in the process the cost to the national economy would likewise decrease. Informing people about what is good or bad for their health cannot be a sporadic exercise. It should take the form of a constant campaign about health hazards ranging from animal fat to secondary smoking. Governments should also do their own homework by preventing pollution of the air and contamination of water and food. The expense of such programmes is minimal in comparison with the costs of medications that could be otherwise incurred.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Tuesday said His Majesty King Hussein's visit to the U.S. is of special importance. Not only because it follows the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, but because the U.S. shoulders a basic responsibility in protecting the Middle East peace process. The newspaper said in its editorial that American Vice-President Al Gore's affirmation in Amman last week that the U.S. will honour its commitments to the process has revived Jordan's confidence that the U.S. realises the importance of translating its keenness for peace into tangible work that would convince all the involved parties of its feasibility. This also shows those parties that the continuation of the peace process would bring positive changes on people's lives in the region. It said, Mr. Gore's statements paved the way for the success of King Hussein's visit to Washington. It said, adding that the King's talks with President Bill Clinton, senior administration officials and congressmen will also have many positive results. Peace is not only declaring the end of a war, it is also declaring a war against poverty which supports extremism, a war against despair which breeds violence, the newspaper said, noting that peace should not allow its enemies any chance to ruin it. It continued that peace also means securing an honourable life for children and protecting them from the phantoms of war.

AL DUSTOUR daily also dwelt on the same topic in its editorial, saying Jordanian political moves, led by King Hussein, in the international arena have reached their climax by His Majesty's meeting Monday with Mr. Clinton, administration officials and Congress members. The paper said these Jordanian moves which come amid intensified regional and international efforts are extremely important because of Jordan's focal role in the peace process. It said the King's talks with Mr. Clinton dealt with the foundations of peace in the Middle East, namely establishing peace at all Arab-Israeli fronts on the basis of international legitimacy, resolutions and the principle of land for peace. Any achievements made for establishing peace will remain threatened and vulnerable unless they were boosted by other achievements on the other Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese tracks, said the paper. Thus in view of the importance of Jordan's role in the process, this role should be enhanced by having Washington honour its pledges and commitments towards Jordan in economy and defence.

Washington Watch

The problems facing Gingrich

By Dr. James Zoghy

ALTHOUGH IT is only half-way through the first 100 days of Republican control of Congress, problems are already beginning to develop. First and foremost among them are the seemingly endless difficulties facing the new Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich — the first Republican to hold that post in 40 years.

Mr. Gingrich enjoyed a meteoric rise to national prominence, which was well-chronicled by the nation's top political reporters. For years, from the beginning of his political career, he sought and worked towards the position he now holds. He worked tirelessly to advance his own personal career and also to help elect a Republican majority which could elect him speaker.

But now, only 50 days after ascending to his coveted leadership role, Mr. Gingrich finds himself as one of the most unpopular politicians in the U.S. At the same time, Mr. Gingrich's highly publicised Republican legislative agenda — the vaunted "Contract with America" — has begun to stall after initial successes and the speaker himself is being confronted by a string of charges of unethical behaviour.

When he assumed control of the Congress in January, it appeared that Mr. Gingrich would have smooth sailing. The Republican "contract" had enough votes to win, Republicans were in control, President Bill Clinton was in trouble, and the public was roughly supportive of the Republicans. Mr. Gingrich had a message and a plan, and what looked like the power to implement it.

But the new speaker ran into problems almost immediately. The kind of ethical problems that stem from carelessness and reaching too far and too fast for power.

In an effort to capitalise on his new position and broad public recognition, Mr. Gingrich announced a major book deal. As details became public it turned out that Mr. Gingrich was to be connected with median tycoon Murdoch. Mr. Murdoch, a somewhat controversial media magnate, has a number of sensitive issues currently pending before the government. His meeting with Mr. Gingrich and the \$4.5 million contract with the speaker had all the earmarks of a conflict of interest and a violation of ethical standards.

Interestingly enough, it appears that the Gingrich-Murdoch book deal was similar, in some respects, to the book deal that ended the congressional career of another speaker of the House, Democrat Jim Wright of Texas. Mr. Wright lost his position in 1989, and it is ironic that the challenge and relentless pressure which brought him down came from a young Republican firebrand from Georgia — Newt Gingrich.

A number of other controversies have erupted in the face of the speaker. In January, his appointee to be the new House historian (a position responsible for maintaining the historical records of the Congress) came under fire for her controversial historical views, and the speaker quickly fired her. Mr. Gingrich's dealings with GOPAC, the political action committee he founded to help elect Republican members of Congress, were the cause of another ethics complaint. According to the complaint, Mr. Gingrich was given approval to teach a college course on the condition that it be non-partisan, but GOPAC helped to fund the course by recruiting 200,000 conservative Republican donors through bitterly partisan attacks on the president. Mr. Gingrich has also been accused of lobbying for the benefit of companies which have made large contributions to GOPAC.

In general, Mr. Gingrich is facing a number of complaints stemming from his use of his congressional staff for

personal and political efforts, which is a violation of House rules. His district office staff used government equipment on government time to help produce a book Mr. Gingrich wrote in 1984, and also worked on material for his college course. Mr. Gingrich also stands accused of using his position to get his wife a job representing an Israeli firm which paid extremely well for little work — another example of Mr. Gingrich using his high position to get "sweetheart" deals.

In short, the very excesses and abuses of power which Mr. Gingrich railed against so hard and so long while the Democrats ran the House are now the charges facing him after only 50 days in office. This hasn't helped the image of the Republican Party, which bills itself as the party of reform, since, Gingrich's troubles are so well-known and he is one of the people most closely identified with the party in the public eye. It is ironic on both counts that Mr. Gingrich defends himself by arguing that his "behaviour is no different than most other members (of the House)."

As a result of this steady stream of negative stories and also, some suggest, Mr. Gingrich's abrasive personal style, the speaker's ratings have fallen to extremely low levels. Back in January, Mr. Gingrich enjoyed a 34 per cent-37 per cent unfavourable rating; but today that rating has fallen to 33 per cent and 47 unfavourable.

At the same time, the Republican "contract" agenda is also suffering. The early sections of the "contract" that came to a vote before the Congress passed easily, in part because they were easy issues and not controversial with the public. Issues like applying the same laws to Congress, which apply to all other employers, ending "unfunded mandates", the process of passing laws requiring the states to take actions without giving them the money to pay for them, cutting congressional staff and committees, opening committee meetings to the public and similar measures passed easily and with little opposition. Mr. Gingrich appeared strong and the Republicans unstoppable.

But the first significant vote on a controversial issue came last month with the fight over the balanced budget amendment. While the amendment easily won the two-thirds majority it needed in the House, Mr. Gingrich's claim that 70 per cent of the voters agreed with the amendment could not win enough Senators for a two-thirds majority in that body and the amendment died. Now there is a fight over "term limits" (limiting the number of terms a member of Congress can serve), with many Republican arguing against the measure or for a version much weaker than proposed in the "contract." This has made Mr. Gingrich appear weak and less in command than he had seemed in January, and has not played well with many in the public who found term limits to be one of the most attractive items in the "contract."

Now the Republicans are attempting to tackle budget cuts, and they must achieve significant reductions in government spending before they can deliver the tax break they promised voters in November. But, as Republicans and the public are learning, it is one thing to talk about cutting the budget and quite another matter to do it. Since the Republicans cannot cut the largest item in the budget — interest on the debt — and since they will not cut the second largest item in the budget — defence — and since they insist on providing a tax break without increasing the deficit, the only area of the budget they can cut from is social programmes.

As the public begins to become aware of the extent of the proposed cuts and the people who would be affected by

them, pressure not to make those cuts is building. The programme which the Republicans are willing to cut, including welfare, aid to farmers, aid to families with dependent children, the federal school lunch programme are supported by almost 70 per cent or more of American voters. Because of the pressure to keep these programmes, 102 Republican members of Congress have told the speaker they will not support the proposed cuts in these programmes.

Problems also loom for most of the other major elements of the "contract." Welfare reform is running into problems as the details emerge about who will be affected by various cuts. While both the House and Senate have passed versions of the line-item veto (which would allow the president to veto individual provisions of a spending bill while signing the rest into law), they must agree on and pass the same version before that provision can take effect, and there are serious doubts that such an agreement can be reached. And until some major spending cuts are agreed to, the tax cuts promised last November will not emerge unless the Republicans break their other promise of reducing the budget deficit.

Even worse for Mr. Gingrich and the Republicans, the Democrats have finally succeeded in regaining the image as the party of the middle class, something they have not really enjoyed since 1964. A recent poll showed that by a margin of 52 per cent-38 per cent Americans think that President Clinton is doing a better job of fighting for the middle class than the Republican Congress. Mr. Clinton himself enjoys an approval rating of 52 per cent, while the same 52 per cent agree that "the more I hear about what the Republicans do in Congress, the less I like it." Mr. Gingrich, the highest-profile Republican in the country, is declining in the polls just as Mr. Clinton, the leading Democrat, is rising.

But while Mr. Gingrich and the Republicans are facing some serious difficulties, so are the Democrats. Former secretary of agriculture Mike Espy was forced to resign from the Clinton cabinet for serious ethics violations. Two other members of the Clinton cabinet, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros and Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, are currently facing serious ethics charges and there are rumours that either one or both of them may be eventually forced to resign.

Yet the president himself seems to be emerging relatively unscathed from investigations into his conduct. While the Republican leadership in the Senate and House will do what they can to bring the Whitewater scandal into the news, the independent Special Counsel which has investigated the matter has not found anything with which to charge the Clinton.

So, at the half-way point through the Republican Congress' first 100 days, what had appeared to be a juggernaut of change led by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich no longer seems so mighty, and the ethical troubles facing the speaker are hurting the Republican theme of change from "business as usual." In fact, the "revolutionary" first 100 days of the Republican Congress are becoming little more than a normal congressional session. Newt Gingrich is losing the luster he'd gained by rising so far and so fast to the point that he seems little more than a normal politician — albeit one with unusually high negative ratings. He will need now to show the ability to bounce back, as Mr. Clinton has, if he is to enjoy the kind of successful tenure as speaker which seemed to likely in the first few heady days.

M. KAHIL



Differences dog U.S.-Russian ties before summit

By Timothy Heritage
Reuters

MOSCOW — Six weeks before U.S. President Bill Clinton and Russian leader Boris Yeltsin meet for a summit, hopes that they can warm up chilly U.S.-Russian relations are dogged by a failure to resolve a number of key disputes.

The Kremlin breathed a sigh of relief when, after weeks of procrastination, Mr. Clinton agreed last week to come to Moscow on May 9 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the allied victory over Nazi Germany in World War II and attend the summit.

But the strains in U.S.-Russian relations were highlighted last Thursday, when talks between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev in Geneva made no headway on the most important issues.

These include the eastward expansion of NATO,

which Russia opposes, differences over how to solve the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, U.S. criticism of Russia's intervention in Chechnya and of Moscow's plans to sell nuclear technology to Iran.

"The simple fact that President Clinton took so long to decide to come to the summit indicates doubts on the future of the Russian-American relationship," Viktor Kremenyuk, deputy director of Moscow's USA and Canada Institute, said.

"But the fact that he agreed to come shows that the two sides recognise the need to talk, even though relations are not very cordial. The fact that they are meeting at all may be more important than what is on the agenda," he told Reuters.

In Geneva, Mr. Kozyrev acknowledged relations between Washington and Russia had sunk after the euphoric period immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of

the 1991 and Mr. Yeltsin's emergence as the key figure in Moscow.

"I would say that indeed the honeymoon has come to an end," Mr. Kozyrev told reporters.

But he said relations were now marked by a practical approach. "The sobering-up period in the wake of the honeymoon ended not in divorce but in a growing ability to resolve jointly problems that we face," he said.

Mr. Clinton had been considering whether or not to come to Russia because of fears that his visit could be interpreted as indirect acceptance of Kremlin policies such as the military campaign to crush independence moves in Chechnya.

But by missing the commemorations of the end of World War II, he risked deeply offending Russians and, in their eyes, belittling their role in the defeat of Nazi Germany.

Some commentators fear that some of the mutual

distrust has reemerged from the cold war era in some quarters of both Washington and Moscow, particularly since the Republican Party's success in elections to the U.S. Congress last year.

"There are people on both sides painting the picture of an evil empire, which does not augur well for the future," said Michael McFaul, senior associate at the Moscow office of the independent Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

"It is good that Clinton has decided to come for the summit and shown the need for dialogue, even if there are doubts about the relationship and what the summit can achieve," he said.

Any further cooling in relations would involve huge risks.

He said any deterioration in relations could, in the worst scenario, hold up or torpedo agreements and negotiations in important areas, including arms reduction.

Ghosts of atrocities return to haunt Latin America

By Michael Stott
Reuters

BOGOTA — Remember the Latin America of torture, disappearances and death squads?

Those who thought democracy had swept away the cobwebs of past dictatorships have had some rude reminders recently that Latin America is still haunted by the ghosts of its authoritarian past.

Brazilian military police this month executed a robbery suspect in broad daylight. Petty thief Cristiano Mello was wrestled to the ground by officers near a smart Rio de Janeiro shopping centre, dragged behind a van and shot dead.

Had television cameras not recorded it, Mr. Mello's death would have passed unnoticed. Instead, the killing was flashed across screens around the world, becoming to some a symbol of how today's democratic Latin America remains hostage to yesterday's repression.

Academics and human rights watchers say the democratic governments installed across the continent in the past decade have done little to change a tradition of brutality by those in authority that goes back beyond the Spanish conquest to the Inca and Aztec empires.

"I'm not very optimistic about the future of democracy in Latin America," said Roderic Camp, a professor at Tulane University in the United States who studies in the region. "Electoral reform and cleaner elections don't change essential ingredients of culture or society."

Those who live and work at the front line, such as Caio Ferraz, a sociologist born and bred in one of Rio's toughest slums, are blunter still. "Brazil is a democracy only because the

law says we are," Mr. Ferraz said. "Between the law and reality there is a vacuum that stretches all the way to the moon."

The government in Argentina, where some 14,000 people died or disappeared at the hands of security forces during the 1970s, prefers these days to talk about an economic miracle which has given it some of the world's fastest growth in the last four years.

But Adolfo Francisco Scilingo, a retired naval officer, brought a different past to life this month when he recounted to a newspaper how thousands of political prisoners were stripped naked and thrown alive from aircraft over the Atlantic Ocean by the military.

Driven by what he said was a need to confess, Mr. Scilingo described how the prisoners, many so weak from torture they had to be helped aboard the aircraft, were injected with sedatives by a navy doctor, undressed, and thrown into the ocean thousands of feet below.

President Carlos Menem reacted by branding Mr. Scilingo a criminal and stripping him of his rank.

Martin Abregu, a lawyer who is one of Argentina's most respected human rights experts, believes Latin American nations have done little to stop future rights abuses. "You still have a weak judiciary, brutal police, politicians who prefer not to touch the subject," he said.

Across the Andes in Peru, Diego Garcia-Sayán, executive director of the Andean Commission of Jurists, echoed that view.

"I think what we are seeing is that democracy and elected regimes are not necessarily synonymous," he said. "What is also needed is an efficient and effective system of justice and protection of citizens."

Features

Koranic healing popular in Gaza

By Donna Abu Nasr
The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — The smell of incense wafted through the clinic as a bearded cleric pushed a patient into the stomach of a patient squirming on a green velvet blanket.

The healer whipped the patient's sides and feet with a stick and recited verses from the Koran.

"There is no God but Allah. In the name of Allah, I cure you," he said, his voice hoarse from shouting at the evil spirit that he said had possessed the 45-year-old man for eight years.

Mr. Saifi runs one of about 100 Koranic clinics that have sprung up in the Gaza Strip recently in another sign of the religious spirit taking root among Palestinians.

During the Israeli occupation, many healers operated on home for fear they would be targeted by the Israelis as Islamic zealots.

Many do support the Muslim fundamentalist movement, but insist they operate independently from the group.

Since Yasser Arafat took over local government for the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho in May, many healers have opened clinics.

Authorities have not tried to close them, despite complaints by the Islamic religious establishment that the healers are charlatans and should be prosecuted.

"We can't interfere in people's beliefs," said Marwan Kanafani, an Arafat spokesman. "Even in the United States you find people who believe in the healing powers of religion."

Koranic healing, especially exorcism of evil spirits, is practiced elsewhere in the Arab World, including in neighbouring Egypt. Healers whip patients to beat the jinn out of them. They say if a patient squirms or whimpers, it is the jinn reacting to the pain and not the patient.

Gaza's healers treat patients suffering from a variety of illnesses, including skin diseases, ulcers, infertility and migraines.

They hand out leaflets with verses from the Koran to be read by the patient or relatives. They also dispense honey, olive oil for a body rub and a drink made of saffron and tuberose.

The cleric said the Prophet Mohammad used the same

treatment to cure his followers more than 1,400 years ago.

Dr. Mahmoud Zahar, a surgeon and leading Hamas activist, said the existence of jinn is a basic Muslim belief and illnesses caused by the evil spirits can be cured by the Koran. He cited verse 55 from Surat Al Rahman: "And the jinn did he create of smokeless fire."

Dr. Zahar said jinn are responsible for troubles that in the Western world would be diagnosed as psychosomatic illnesses and neuroses.

Many Muslim clerics dismiss such claims as foolish. Mufti Abdul Karim Kahlout, the Muslim spiritual leader of Gaza City, said the only cure the Koran can offer is healing of the soul. "Have you ever seen a pharmacy that takes prescriptions for Koranic verses?" he asked sarcastically.

Mr. Kahlout said the healers exploit Islam for personal gain. "They are charlatans and heretics," he said.

Mr. Saifi and a colleague, Sheikh Issa Daour, dismissed the mufti's criticism, citing verse 82 of the Koran's Surat Al Isra: "And we reveal of the Koran that which is a healing and a mercy for believers..."

They said that it was up to their patients how much they wanted to pay and that the poor were treated for free.

A cardboard box attached to a wall in their two-room clinic carries a sign reading: "Please don't forget to pay."

The clinic is furnished with a bed, a few plastic chairs, a stereo set blaring recordings from the Koran and headphones for the patients.

The healers do not advertise directly, but patients often take out space in local newspapers to make their gratitude public.

Mr. Saifi and Mr. Daour proudly pointed to a bulletin board outside their clinic plastered with messages from patients they said were cured of diabetes, sterility and ulcers.

Mr. Saifi was less successful with the exorcism he attempted that day. But although he failed to evict the evil spirit, he said he was able to communicate with him.

The patient whined as Mr. Saifi asked the jinn who he was.

"I'm Pakistani. My name is Awatef," came back the reply. Mr. Saifi said it came from the jinn, although it sounded like the patient's voice.

By Alistair Lyon
Reuters

KARACHI — Sweating and angry, a retired engineer brushes away glass from his shattered windshield on the edge of Karachi's troubled Faisal Colony area.

"Three young men with scarves round their faces came from some hideout and I told the driver to stop the car," he says. "They started beating the driver and breaking the glass."

Petty harassment is just one more risk for the 12 million people who live in Pakistan's volatile southern port city.

Once Karachi was a relaxed, vibrant commercial hub, where people strolled the waterfront at night and made money by day. Now gunfire crackles after dark and the city has become a flashpoint for ethnic, sectarian and drug-related violence.

The engineer, who gave his name as Haji Khan, believes the vandals were from the ethnic Mohajir National Movement (MQM) or the splinter MQM-Haqiqi faction, but does not know which.

Haji Khan carries no weapon. "Sometimes the police search and whatever explanation I give them, that this is for my own safety, they will say no, you are one of them," he explains.

"If I had had a gun I would have shot them. God is great and if he calls me I will go."

Inside Faisal Colony, a shabby huddle of breeze-block houses with corrugated iron roofs, shops are shuttered on the normally busy main street. Women glance nervously up alleyways as they shepherd children home from one of the few schools open.

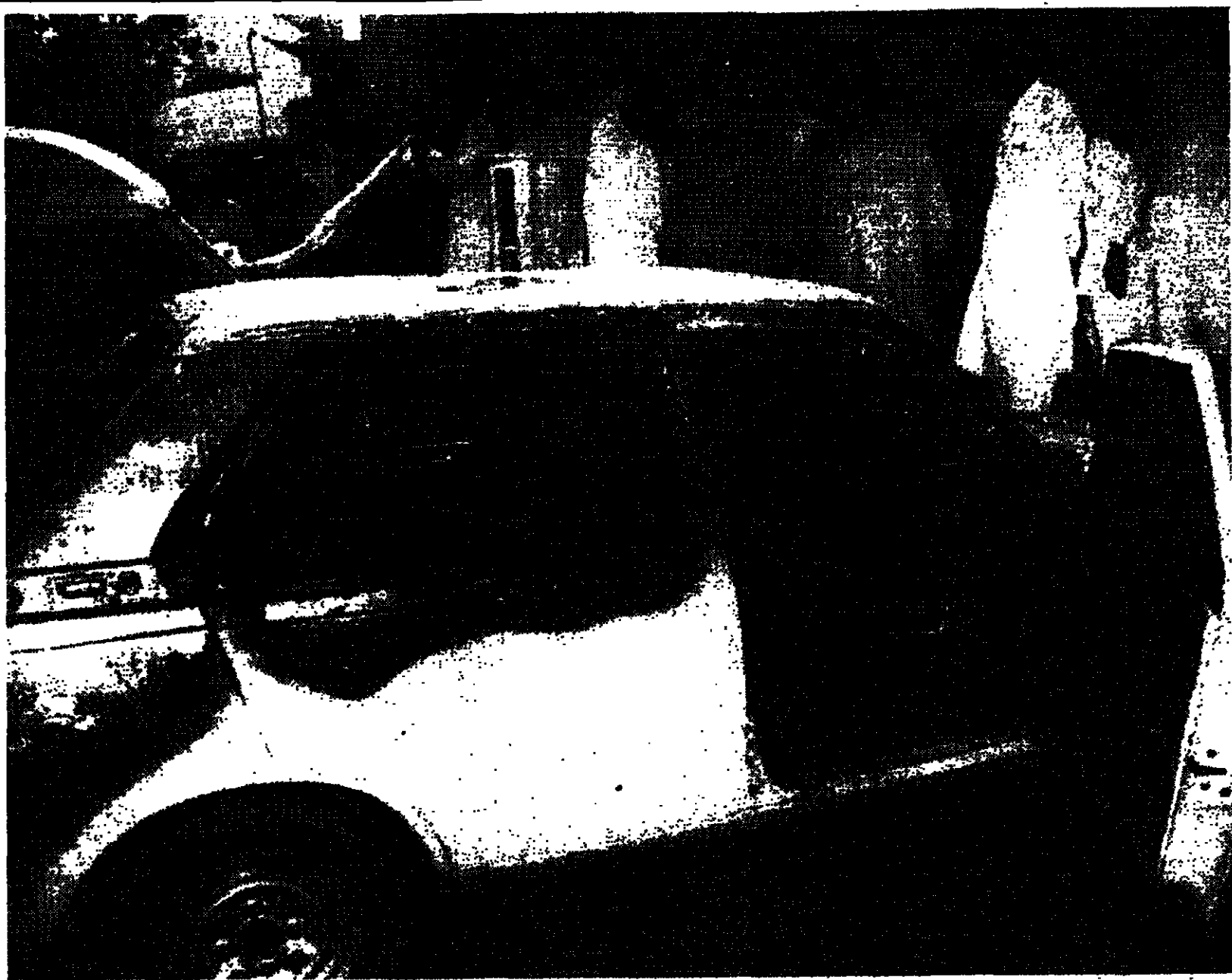
"This is the third day we haven't been able to sell anything," says Ifthikhar, a vegetable vendor at a corner stall.

"People started firing in the area, we don't know who. Four people were wounded two days ago and two yesterday," he says.

A blue armoured police car drives slowly down the dusty street, watched by wary residents.

"Everyone is suffering, afraid to leave their homes. The government has all the power," says Mustafa, a bearded man in his 20s, gesturing at the patrol.

"But what are they doing?" One answer comes a few



People gather around the car that was used in a bomb attack March 10 in front of a Shiite Muslim mosque. At least 10 people have been killed and several injured in the powerful explosion (AFP photo)

Fear pervades daily life in Karachi

minutes later when the prowling armoured car turns onto a wide, deserted boulevard separating districts loosely controlled by rival MQM factions.

The policemen stop at the smouldering remnants of tyres blocking the road and force a passerby to kick them aside before banding him inside the vehicle and driving away.

"We have arrested three terrorists and found one Kalashnikov rifle, a pistol, a revolver and 108 rounds of ammunition," the patrol leader says later, sipping a drink at a juice stand.

Residents — and the London-based human rights group Amnesty International — say police often

hold "suspects" rounded up at random until their families pay a ransom.

By the standards of Karachi, where 340 people, including two U.S. consulate staffers, have died this year, this is not a very bloody day, with no big clashes or killings reported.

Yet the fear and tension in Faisal Colony shows how shadowy gunmen and crude police tactics can paralyse normal life in this and many other districts of Pakistan's biggest city.

In despair, leading businessmen called a strike on Saturday to try to persuade Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to act more vigorously to control the rampant lawlessness.

"Many parts of Karachi are closed for several days because of the law and order situation," said S. M. Muneer, president of the Federation of Pakistani Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) before the strike. "The general public is very much upset and panicky."

"People are not putting up new industries in the Karachi area. Many people have closed their shops. A few might have left Karachi. People are afraid to invest their money."

Pakistani authorities on Saturday night hit back at strike leaders, removing Mr. Muneer and three FPCCI vice-presidents from

their positions because of their role in leading the stoppage.

The strike, which brought business activity to a near-standstill in Karachi and reduced it in the big cities of Lahore and Rawalpindi, was denounced by Ms. Bhutto's government as politically motivated.

Mr. Muneer told reporters by telephone the removal order was illegal and would be challenged before courts of law.

Ms. Bhutto blames the violence on ethnic groups such as the MQM, militant Sunni and Shiite Muslim factions, and drug gangs — all armed with guns diverted to Karachi during

the guerrilla war against Soviet troops in neighbouring Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The prime minister also says the people of Karachi have not done enough to curb the mayhem in their midst.

"People in Karachi are angry, yes, they have been angry since 1981 against every government," she told Reuters in a recent interview at her home in the city.

Ms. Bhutto faults Karachi residents for not showing enough cooperation with the government and police. "Their reaction has been unhelpful to catching terrorists," she said.

King: Jordan will set an example

(Continued from page 1)

Washington Fayed Al Tarawneh.

In his meeting with Mr. King, King Hussein reiterated Jordanian principles on the need to establish a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East and the Kingdom's support of any efforts that would lead for progress on other Arab-Israeli negotiating tracks, Petra said.

The meeting was attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor and the delegation accompanying the King.

Also Monday, King Hussein met with Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy of the Senate's Finance Committee and briefed him on Jordan's stance on the peace process.

Sen. Leahy stressed that he Senate's overwhelming majority supports Jordan in the debt forgiveness issue, Petra said.

Welcoming King Hussein, Mr. Christopher noted at Tuesday's press conference that the King had received so very important awards during his current trip to the U.S. The Ronald Reagan Freedom Medal and the 1995 Peace Award of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre Museum of Tolerance.

"Those are extremely important awards and they are a reflection of the respect and affection that we all have in the U.S. for the King and for the courageous stand at has taken in the Middle East over the last year and in so many respects by the King," Mr. Christopher said.

"We see so many fundamental transformations in the Middle East with the peace agreement between Jordan and Israel standing as a signal accomplishment of a future recent period. We are looking forward to working with the King and his ministers on trying to make peace a living reality, to bring peace to the people of Jordan and the entire region and the fruits of a warm peace, the fruits of a relationship that have been created." I want to

say that the opportunity to work with the King on these matters has been a signal one for the U.S. We want to do all we can to assist Jordan and Israel and assist... transformation that has taken place there.

"The King and I look forward as we have so often in the past to reviewing not only global and regional matters but bilateral matters between our two countries that we do it in the context of a great warmth and friendship."

The King said: "I'd like to say how pleased I am to be able to be in Washington at this time and I have had the privilege and pleasure of meeting the president yesterday. I have visited Los Angeles and I was very touched and moved by the warm reception there and thank you for the opportunity to meet many friends in that beautiful city and thank you very much indeed Mr. Secretary for the opportunity to meet with you once again, a dear friend whom we have seen in our region time and again furthering the cause of peace, a comprehensive peace in that region."

"As far as our relations, Sir, they are always warm. They are founded on trust and confidence and a common view and determination to achieve peace within our region for all the peoples there."

"As for what has been achieved so far we are very proud and happy to have succeeded in many cases beyond our expectations in terms of the time that it was going to take to implement variants of our agreements that are between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and we are determined to see a full peace, an honourable peace, a warm peace come about and hopefully in the region as a whole, in any event, for this peace to be an example for others and an opportunity for people to move away from the tragedies of the past towards coming together and building together a future

that is worthy of them.

"We are totally dedicated to the cause of an everlasting peace between the children of Abraham and their followers."

Asked whether there could be peace in the Middle East without Syria, the King said: "I certainly hope that Syria will be a part of the peace that we all seek in the region and I think that the secretary will be better qualified to answer this question..."

On the debt relief issue, the King said: "We are aware of the fact that this subject is being looked at by all our friends here in a very positive way and we are quite satisfied that the results hopefully will be positive."

Mr. Christopher added: "The U.S. feels deeply obligated to carry out its commitment to the King and to the government of Jordan. This is a request the U.S. has made, by the president to its Congress, to approve this form of debt relief."

"The action taken by the Senate last week to approve it in a satisfactory form, I think, is an indication of a growing understanding on Capitol Hill of the importance of responding to the courageous action taken by the government of Jordan."

"I appreciate the willingness of the King to meet with some leaders of the Congress, but I would like to emphasise that it is a request that comes from the president, the administration and the Congress to take an action which is very much in our national interests to take because we must support those who take risks for peace as the King and his country have courageously done."

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Villagers flee Turkish forces

(Continued from page 1)

ing place across the border involves the section of northern Iraq controlled by Iraqi Kurds who want independence from Baghdad. Patrolled by allied warplanes since the end of the Gulf war, the area is beyond the reach of Iraq's military.

Turkey contends about 2,800 PKK guerrillas have been operating in northern Iraq from where they used to conduct hit and run attacks.

Prime Minister Ciller moved Tuesday to calm Western fears that the incursion would turn into a military occupation of northern Iraq.

Ms. Ciller told deputies from her True Path Party Tuesday: "The aim of Turkish troops is not an occupation."

"Turkish forces will withdraw as soon as their objectives are achieved," she insisted, adding that it was an action of "legitimate defence."

The United States, which had not previously criticised Turkey's incursion, for the first time on Monday voiced

concern to Ankara over the operation and its effect on civilians.

The U.S. ambassador met Ms. Ciller to express "concern about the reports that we have been receiving that Turkish forces might be preparing for a longer stay in northern Iraq," the State Department revealed.

A bipartisan group of senators, including Republicans Olympia Snowe and Alfonse D'Amato, and Democrats John Kerry and Russ Feingold, have joined Democratic Senator Califorme Pell in supporting a resolution condemning Turkey's invasion of northern Iraq as a violation of international law.

"Turkey's militaristic policy towards the Kurds goes beyond the pale of civilised behaviour," Mr. Pell, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said in introducing the legislation March 23.

"It is time for the United States to take a principled stand, express its opposition to Turkey's invasion of Iraqi Kurdistan, and cut off supplies of U.S. military equipment to Turkey."

Mr. Ekeus is to deliver a report on April 10 to the U.N. Security Council on Iraq's compliance with Gulf War ceasefire resolutions.

The Security Council cannot lift the embargo imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait if Baghdad fails to release all details on germ warfare research.

Mr. Ekeus met Kuwait's emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, earlier Tuesday to discuss issues of mutual interest, the official agency KUNA reported.

Israel, PLO narrow differences

(Continued from page 1)

but the militants are due to win in principle 15 to 20 per cent of the votes cast," he told high school pupils late Monday.

He added that the "Palestinians are ready for such a vote because they have in front of their eyes the standards of Israeli democracy."

They had witnessed the workings of institutions such as Israel's supreme court, he added.

Dr. Erakat said the joint draft on elections "will be part of an intermediate accord with five chapters: the redeployment, the transfer of powers, judicial questions, economic questions and the elections."

Israel and the PLO have agreed on a July 1 deadline to complete their negotiations on the second phase of autonomy: military redeployment on the West Bank and elections.

Dr. Erakat warned that all five parts of the accord must be resolved by the target date or "there will no longer be anything to discuss."

The PLO insists that elections can not take place before Israeli troops out of population centres in the West Bank, as the 1993 declaration of principles outlines.

Meanwhile in Tel Aviv, a newspaper announced that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had approved a plan by which the army would withdraw gradually from seven towns on the West Bank.

Israeli troops would first leave Jenin in the north where a special unit would be set up to ensure security for Israelis from the two Jewish settlements in the area, the Yedioth Aharonot reported.

If the plan proves successful, it would be copied in other West Bank towns such as Ramallah and Bethlehem.

The Palestinians have said they could only accept a "Jenin-first" plan if a timetable was first drawn up for the whole of the West Bank.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat is ready to cooperate with Israel in fighting militants because he wants to ease Israeli security concerns and speed up a troop withdrawal in the West Bank, a senior Israeli official said Tuesday.

In a nod to Israel, Mr. Arafat proposed joint Israeli-Palestinian security patrols in the West Bank, said Nissim Zivli, secretary general of the ruling Labour Party, who met with Mr. Arafat on Monday.

"I can say that Arafat understood very well that one of the obstacles... is the terrorist attacks," Mr. Zivli told the Associated Press. "It is

for me a very important change in his behaviour."

Mr. Arafat told Mr. Zivli that in the beginning he did not take a hard hand against the militants because he hoped they would eventually cooperate with his rule, according to a Yedioth Aharonot reporter who sat in on the Arafat-Zivli meeting.

"The extremists didn't understand the hint, they exploited my tolerance... and I stopped being soft with them," Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying by Yedioth.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Mr. Arafat has shown "a certain degree of progress" in dealing with militants, but said no agreements have been reached on possible joint patrols in the West Bank.

In a related development, Mr. Peres dismissed reports which said Israel had proposed the Palestinians establish a state in Gaza in exchange for dropping claims to the West Bank.

"I don't know of any such proposal," Mr. Peres said, but added it was possible the idea had come up in some

Israeli-Palestinian forum.

"There is a difference between a proposal that is floating around and one that formally exists," he said.

London's Sunday Times reported Mr. Peres said in an interview that he favoured relocating several West Bank settlements when Palestinian autonomy was extended there later this year.

Asked to confirm that was now his view, Mr. Peres told the Associated Press: "Yes. But not as part of an agreement with the Palestinians. (It) should be a unilateral Israeli choice."

Israeli Radio said Tuesday a senior Palestinian official has edited a map of Palestine showing Tel Aviv and other towns in Israel as Jewish settlements.

The map of Palestine has been edited by the Institute of Arab Studies run by Faisal Hussein.

Mr. Hussein told the radio that the map would "remain our reference as long as the Israelis continue to use Biblical terms such as Judea and Samaria to refer to the occupied West Bank."

U.S. seeks Libyan oil ban

(Continued from page 1)

countries they have to cross (Egypt or Sudan) or they will enter Saudi airspace."

"Let Saudi Arabia then shoot them down with their aircraft and missiles. The pilgrims are ready for martyrdom to finish with this comedy that is blocking their way to Mecca."

Col. Qadhafi threatened to pull Libya out of the United Nations, which he charged had become "a tool in the hands of American, British and Zionist imperialists."

But he made no mention of Washington's call for an oil ban.

A Libyan opposition leader said the U.S.-proposed embargo on Libyan oil sales would likely help accelerate the fall of Col. Qadhafi's regime.

But Abdul Moniem Al

Houini, head of the Libyan National Salvation Front, cautioned that Washington would have trouble pushing an embargo through the U.N. Security Council because of opposition from Europeans, especially Spain and Italy.

Mr. Houini told the AP in a telephone call returned from outside Libya that if an oil embargo was adopted, it would give impetus to the opposition and cut Col. Qadhafi's ability to buy support. Libya's oil exports are estimated at about \$8 billion a year.

Mr. Houini was member of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council which overthrew the monarchy in 1969 before he broke with Col. Qadhafi in 1975. He visited Washington earlier this month, seeking American help to remove Col. Qadhafi from power.

Officials say U.S. dependence on oil imports endangers national security

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States' growing dependence on oil imports threatens national security, senior officials said Monday, but they rejected calls to limit imports or take new measures to boost domestic output.

Senate foreign relations committee chairman Jesse Helms, a Republican, urged the Democrat administration to change its policy to reduce U.S. dependence on oil from "potentially hostile foreign countries" in the Middle East.

"Petroleum imports threaten to impair national security because of the growing reliance of our economy on imported oil from a politically volatile region of the world," under secretary of commerce for export administration William Reinsch told the committee.

But setting import restrictions would only hamper the U.S. economy, and the government believes that its "ongoing efforts to increase production and promote energy conservation and efficiency represent the best means to limit U.S. reliance on foreign oil," Mr. Reinsch said.

Mr. Helms argued, however, that "our policies in this area are placing Americans at a dangerous economic and security risk."

Imports accounted for more than half U.S. oil consumption last year for the first time, edging up to 50.4 per cent of the total, while U.S. oil production fell to 6.62 million barrels a day, the lowest level in 40 years.

If the current trend continues, Mr. Helms said, "the United States will depend on foreign countries to provide

two-thirds of U.S. oil needs by 2005, twice the level of 20 years earlier."

Former energy secretary Donald Hodel warned meanwhile that "the world is on the brink of another oil shock" because of the failure of the U.S. government to react to the deteriorating political situation in Saudi Arabia.

He said Saudi Arabia could deteriorate into civil war after the death of the aging King Fahd, and raised the specter of Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil supplier, using its power to disrupt world markets.

The United States has carried out a year-long study on the oil import question after the Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA) asked for action on the issue, citing a law empowering the government

to take action if imports pose a threat to national security.

But the study concluded in a report sent to President Bill Clinton last month that curbing imports was not the answer.

"The costs of import restrictions would have a negative effect on our economy and would not correct some of the major reasons for our increasing dependence on foreign oil," Mr. Reinsch said.

Joshua Gotbaum, assistant secretary of defense for economic security, stressed that the United States was a lot less dependent on imports than its European and Japanese allies.

He added that the Pentagon was satisfied it could meet its oil needs even if it had to carry out two regional military operations at one time.

But he stressed that Washington was well aware that Iraq and Iran "both pose direct military threats to the Gulf region" and said the U.S. Defense Department "is prepared to prevent potential military adversaries from interfering with the global flow of oil."

The IPAA is urging Congress to take action to boost the U.S. domestic oil industry, which has lost 57,100 jobs in the past five years.

Assistant energy secretary for policy Susan Tierney urged the Republican Congress to abandon planned budget cuts to the domestic industry, notably spending for research into new technology to find an extract oil.

She said the government will be sending proposals for financial and other incentives for the industry to the White House in the next week.

IMF burns midnight oil on new crisis rescue fund

PARIS (AFP) — The IMF has given itself one more month to complete a plan for a rescue fund to ensure that cash is available for any new crisis along the lines of the Mexican devaluation, monetary sources have said.

The plan is expected to be part of a package of measures proposed by the head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Michel Camdessus, to strengthen the fund's capacity to cope with the strains of a changing environment.

The proposals might include features to make extra monetary reserves available to Russia and other ex-communist IMF members, the sources said.

The plan was likely to be ready in time for the spring meeting of the interim committee, the IMF's top policy-making body.

The sources said that staff were trying to put together a "credible" package for discussion by the 24-member ministerial committee scheduled to meet in Washington on April 26, but were still working on the details.

The Paris-based International Herald Tribune (IHT) quoted Mr. Camdessus as saying he planned to propose distributing 16 billion Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) (about \$24 billion) to the poorest IMF members and 38 other countries, including the ex-Soviet republics.

Mr. Camdessus was reported as saying that his proposal also involved setting an additional 20 billion SDRs (\$30 billion) aside for a special fund intended as a safety net to be drawn upon if IMF members were to face another financial emergency like the one which hit Mexico at the end of December.

The IMF mobilised about \$18 billion last January as part of a rescue for Mexico amounting to about \$51 billion.

Mr. Camdessus has also said that the fund was considering ways of providing an "early warning" system to detect potential problems in countries' financial and monetary management before they reach crisis proportions.

Other components of the package, according to Mr. Camdessus, might include a further increase in IMF quotas — the shares in the fund's capital subscribed by member countries and based on criteria reflecting their relative weight in the world economy.

An alternative to a quota increase — the latest one took effect at the end of 1992 — would be to increase the amount committed for lending to the IMF by the Group of Ten leading financial powers, presently 17 billion SDR (about \$25.5 billion) under their so-called general agreement to borrow (GAB).

The SDR is the IMF's monetary reserve asset, established in 1968, which can be held by countries in their monetary reserves or used in official transactions with other holders.

This asset, currently valued at about \$1.50, is also used as a unit of account by international financial institutions.

The 38 new members of the IMF which would benefit from the proposed SDR distribution are those which have so far not had access to this asset because they joined after 1981, when the last allocation of SDRs was completed.

Following pressure from the United States and other Group of Seven (G-7) powers for international financial institutions to shoulder a large share of the burden of assistance to Russia and other ex-communist countries, the IMF last year proposed a three-tier funding package.

It proposed a general allocation of 36 billion SDRs (\$54 billion), a one-year extension of its systemic transformation facility (STF) set up two years ago to help countries in transition make the first steps on the road towards reform, and a widening of the limits for access to IMF resources for all members in need of balance of payments support.

Mr. Camdessus' call for an allocation of 36 billion SDRs was blocked by the G-7 countries which instead opted for a British-American proposal for a much more limited allocation. This in turn was blocked by developing nations.

Israel could be among most developed nations — chief economist

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's chief economist said Tuesday that the Jewish state could become one of the world's most developed nations if the government accelerated economic reforms.

Bank of Israel Director Yacov Frenkel, presenting the central bank's annual report at a news conference, said the economy was "comfortably situated" to continue growing at an annual rate of around five per cent.

"The Israeli economy stands before a golden opportunity to take a path towards a high ranking among the developed nations," he said. "The potential for growth is high."

The 400-page report summarised 1994 data published recently by the Central Statistics Bureau which Mr. Frenkel said reflected an overall positive economic performance.

— The economy grew 6.5 per cent, and four per cent per capita.

— Industrial output grew 7.6 per cent.

— Exports grew 10.8 per cent.

— Unemployment fell from 10 per cent to 7.8 per cent, despite a continuing immigration wave that brought more than 600,000 newcomers, most from the former Soviet Union, since 1990.

Real wages rose 10 per cent, with the average monthly salary around 3,900 shekels, or \$1,300. Annual per capita income is about \$14,000, on par with some countries in western Europe.

The statistics reflected a continuing economic boom partly attributed to widening markets as a decade-old Arab boycott eases, and the country's emergence as a major hi-tech exporter.

But Mr. Frenkel noted that long-term growth was endangered by relatively high inflation, which was 14.5 per cent last year. He also criticised the six per cent rise in private consumption and relatively low savings rate of 18 per cent of disposable income.

Productivity has remained stagnant for several years, primarily because of a high number of immigrants requiring retraining, he said.

Mr. Frenkel praised the government for recent decisions to cut taxes and spending by 1.2 billion shekels (\$400 million) each and hand out to citizens options for the purchase of \$2 billion in stocks of state-owned companies.

But he said a more determined reform drive was needed.

"In 1994 there was insufficient progress. Unequivocal action to reduce government involvement in the economy, accelerate privatisation and

continue opening up the economy... will increase the stability necessary for growth," he said.

Mr. Frenkel said that despite relatively low inflation in the last three months, he would continue tight monetary policies. The central bank's interest rate is now 14.8 per cent.

He also said he opposed devaluing the shekel, long holding at about three to the U.S. dollar, despite domestic price rises. The stable exchange rate combined with the increasing costs are undercutting exporters' profits.

The high interest rates and declining profits are among the reasons cited for a collapse of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, which lost nearly 40 per cent of its paper value during 1994.

The market's Mishkan index rose 1.4 per cent Tuesday to 163.2.

U.S. targets India in Asia trade strategy

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. administration is pursuing a policy of increasing trade and cooperation with the rapidly growing economies of South Asia, particularly India, lawmakers were told.

"India is one of the world's most important big emerging markets," said Jeffrey Garten, under secretary of commerce for international trade.

"There are tremendous opportunities for the United States there."

Mr. Garten and other officials appearing before a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee said Washington is moving aggressively to improve ties in the region, and that the outlook for India has considerably brightened since economic reforms began in 1991.

"Stability and growth in India are of enormous importance through southern Asia, from the Middle East to Indochina," he said. "It would be hard to describe a nation that could be more central to our interests in the century ahead — or one with whom the promise of cooperation and friendship is greater."

While bilateral trade remains comparatively small, Mr. Garten said increased U.S. interest in India has been demonstrated by the

U.S. visit of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and visits to India by several cabinet-level delegations in the last year.

"These are not simply efforts to show the flag," Mr. Garten said. "They are efforts to lay the foundation for a new U.S.-India relationship that immediately and importantly benefits both countries."

Mr. Garten said disputes over intellectual property rights and human rights should not undermine the U.S. policy of increasing cooperation with India, whose population is expected to top one billion by the turn of the century.

"The challenge is to deal with all of these (problems) just as we deal with our closest allies, and that is that no one issue undercuts the entire relationship," he said. "It used to be that (emerging markets) were seen as foreign policy problems. Now we want to view them as opportunities for new, mutually beneficial relationships."

Mr. Garten and Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary told the panel that the administration of President Bill Clinton was also seeking increased economic cooperation with Pakistan, but faced limits because of a legislative ban on certain types of aid.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY MARCH 29, 1995
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Make arrangements now for recreation you want to enjoy in the future. Show your finest talent to others and gain their support.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Do what you can at home today to have more harmony there. Sidestep a foe who has done you much harm in the past and will continue to do so if not prevented.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Add to your success by dealing cleverly with others and put your ideas to work intelligently. Be careful of your reputation in any situation where a woman is concerned.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You must use tact and diplomacy at this time if you are to gain your wishes. Take exercise to improve your health and vitality.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Know what it is that you really want and then go after it in a positive way. Strive to have more harmony with family members and loved ones.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Take time to concentrate on just where you're going and how best to gain your true aims. Gain more support from a loved one today in any endeavour.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Contacting influential persons and showing your admiration for them brings fine results. Improve your appearance to those you come in contact with.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Study new outlets that could bring added success in the future. Become more involved in community affairs and gain the prestige of others.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have a true understanding of a new interest and can gain your aims easily today. Think along constructive lines in any project.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get busy at regular routines and plan how they can be made easier and more profitable in the future. Be logical in any of your projects.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Contact an ally who is progressive and come to a fine meeting of the minds. Find a better way to gain your most cherished aims that you desire today.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are able to make improvements to your environment today. Cooperate with fellow associates and get much accomplished. You will find others to support your position.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

IEA sees need for cooperation on energy security

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Six countries could be called on to meet more than half of global oil demand by 2010, raising concerns about vulnerability of importers to any supply crisis, an International Energy Agency (IEA) official said Tuesday.

IEA Deputy Executive Director John Ferriter told a sub-Saharan oil and minerals conference oil demand was expected to grow to between 85 and 105 million barrels per day by 2010.

"IEA estimates show that

six countries — Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Venezuela — might be called upon to produce more than 50 per cent of the world's oil (by 2010)," he said.

The IEA recently projected the world would use an average 69.2 million barrels daily this year, a million up on last year when global oil demand was its highest for five years.

The projected growth in import dependency raised concerns about "vulnerability

to economic dislocation in the event of a supply disruption," Mr. Ferriter said.

He said any number of events could again shake world oil markets and suggested an effective emergency response measure was to hold stocks.

IEA member countries had agreed to hold emergency stocks equivalent to at least 90 days of net imports, he said, adding that they presently hold about 175 days of stocks.

But, should they decide to

maintain the same ratio of stocks to imports in the future as they now do, they would need to increase stocks by some 40 per cent by the year 2010.

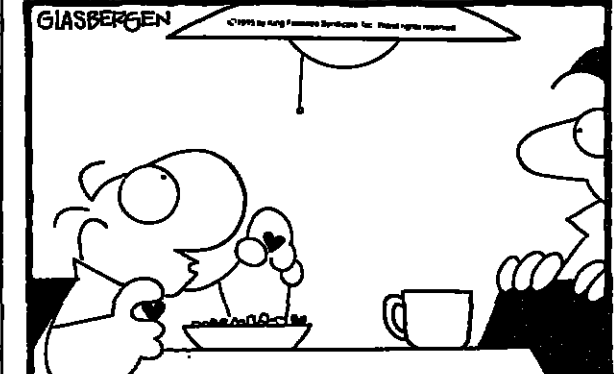
"In addition, the projected lower share of IEA countries in world oil consumption will put an extra burden on them in times of oil crisis, since non-OECD countries with burgeoning oil demand may not be adequately equipped in terms of stockholding to deal with a supply disruption," Mr. Ferriter said.

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THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

THISO

FEZOR

TURTEG

SHOMID

Answer: _____ FOR _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BLOOD MANGY NIPPLE BARREN
Answer: What the well diggers thought of their work — BORING

THE Daily Crossword by CF Murray

ACROSS

- Neely closing
- Desert garments
- Visit briefly
- Detritus
- headache
- Village or hamlet
- Misnomer
- Hershey's ball
- town
- Hawthorne place
- Grandmother
- Cop's quarry
- Final word
- Memorial
- Caffe
- Shipped wedding
- expresses
- Mine feature
- Machievous
- Norse god
- River of Hades
- Ad scheme
- Spread compost
- polio
- Houston pro
- Interest in an enterprise
- Vietnam's land
- abbr.
- Math course, briefly
- Hair
- Evaluate
- Coast
- Animal food
- Stylish
- Cop's quarry
- Long and lean
- Postcard
- Roger or Demi
- Esport
- Boat
- Supper's opposite
- Borach
- ingredient
- Modern-day drop
- Shipped on

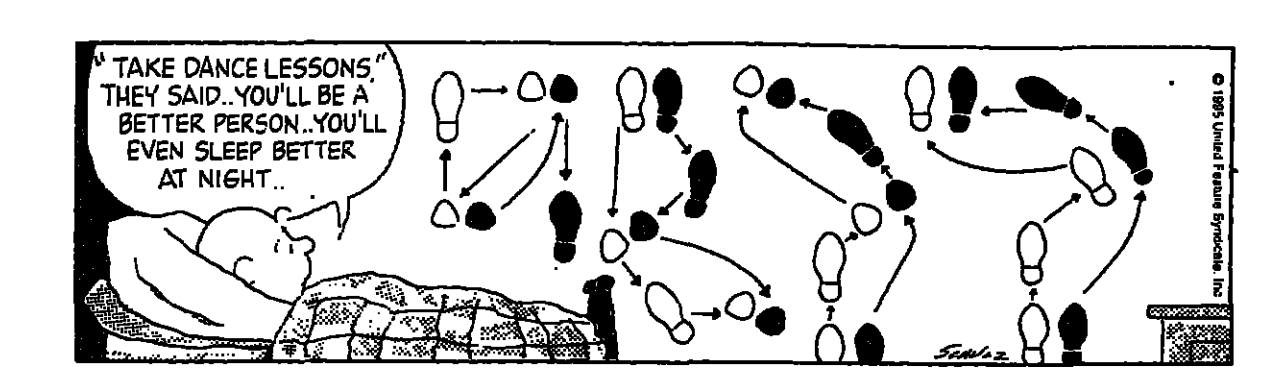
DOWN

- Chunky portion
- Queen of Spades
- for all
- Seasons
- Planet
- Thelonious
- Sun-dried brick
- Frozen dessert
- British composer
- Like a cathedral
- Swedish
- San Antonio
- shrine
- Cost inset
- Bank business
- Osaka's land
- Auto pioneer
- Monro or Sam
- Dealing Under the —
- Rainbow
- Sumph
- Next neighbor
- Dep
- Will foe
- Certain Asian
- Ons addressed
- Ration of —
- 37
- Egg
- Legato
- Chore
- Decrease
- Electroner
- Portion
- Depend
- Underground worker
- 64
- Concealing
- Cudgel
- TV part
- Have
- Boggy
- Conceal
- Prerequisite

Puzzle solved:

ACROSS: 1. NEELY, 2. DESERT, 3. VISIT, 4. DETRITUS, 5. HEADACHE, 6. VILLAGE, 7. MISNOMER, 8. HERSHEY'S, 9. TOWN, 10. HAWTHORNE, 11. GRANDMOTHER, 12. COP'S, 13. FINAL, 14. MEMORIAL, 15. CAFE, 16. SHIPPED, 17. EXPRESS, 18. MINE, 19. MACHIEVOUS, 20. NORSE, 21. RIVER, 22. AD, 23. SPREAD, 24. POLIO, 25. HOUSTON, 26. INTEREST, 27. VIETNAM, 28. ABBR., 29. MATH, 30. HAIR, 31. EVALUATE, 32. COAST, 33. ANIMAL, 34. STYLISH, 35. COP'S, 36. LONG, 37. POSTCARD, 38. ROGER, 39. ESPORT, 40. BOAT, 41. SUPPER, 42. BORACH, 43. INGREDIENT, 44. MODERN, 45. SHIPPED, 46. DOWN, 47. CHUNKY, 48. QUEEN, 49. FOR, 50. SEASONS, 51. PLANET, 52. THOLONIOUS, 53. SUN, 54. FROZEN, 55. BRITISH, 56. LIKE, 57. SWEDISH, 58. SAN, 59. SHRINE, 60. COST, 61. BANK, 62. OSAKA, 63. AUTO, 64. MONRO, 65. DEALING, 66. RAINBOW, 67. SUMPH, 68. NEXT, 69. DEP, 70. WILL, 71. CERTAIN, 72. ONS, 73. RATION, 74. 37, 75. EGG, 76. LEGATO, 77. CHORE, 78. DECREASE, 79. ELECTRONER, 80. PORTION, 81. DEPEND, 82. UNDERGROUND, 83. 64, 84. CONCEALING, 85. CUDGEL, 86. TV, 87. HAVE, 88. BOGGY, 89. CONCEAL, 90. PREREQUISITE.

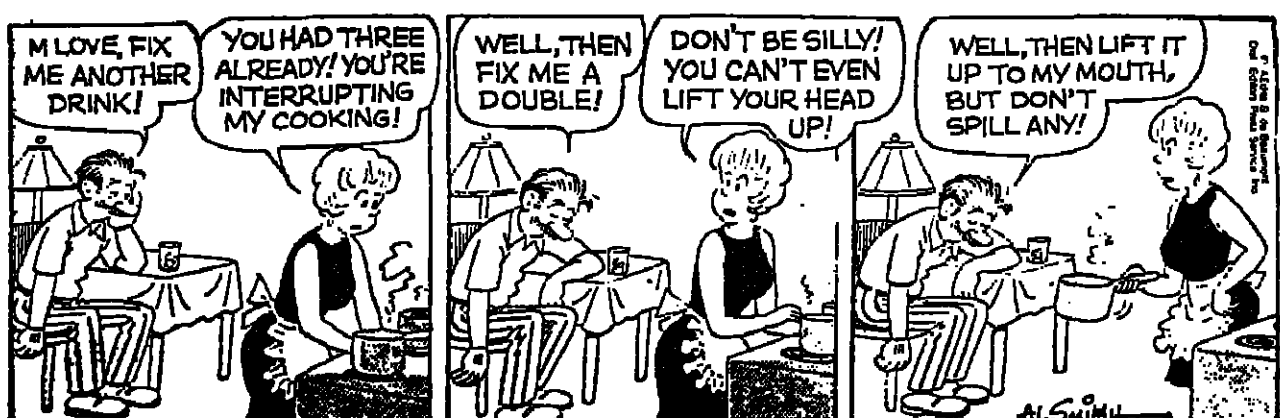
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Business & Finance

Owners of restaurants, patisseries rebel against municipality

OWNERS OF restaurants and confectionery stores are locked in a dispute with the Municipality of Greater Amman (MGA) over the usage of space in front and around their shops. According to the businessmen, their usage of the front and side yards has been licensed by the MGA many years ago against a fee of JD 5 per square metre which was raised later to JD 30 per square metre. Few months ago, the MGA hiked the fee to JD 70 per square metre for restaurants and confectionery stores in prime areas. In other locations, the fee was hiked either to JD 60 or JD 45 but those businesses which were charged JD 30 were not affected. As the businesses in prime areas, such as Shmeisani and Wafsi Al Tel (Gardens) Street, denounced the higher fees, the MGA reduced the fees from JD 75 to JD 50 per square metre for prime areas and from JD 60 to JD 40 per square metre for second-best locations.

The reduction in fees did not appease the high-street restaurateurs and patisseries owners who still refuse to pay the dues by the March 31, 1995 deadline. They say there is no reason for raising the fees which they cannot pay under the present economic slowdown. Stressing that their front and side yards had beautified the area, the businessmen said the authorities should give them more facilities and encouragement instead of putting additional obstacles to their projects. MGA Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi emphasised that sidewalks and front yards belong to pedestrians in the first place and any use of these pavements by businesses was a violation that the MGA will not accept. He emphasised that "we cannot implement the laws and regulations on public restaurants in King Talal Street, Qweisneh and Wihdat and not be able to implement them on high-style restaurant owners in Shmeisani and Wafsi Al Tel Street. The law must be implemented on everybody."

Dr. Abbadi said the MGA was not seeking profit but rather to end violations and that courts will decide in the dispute between the MGA and the businessmen. Tareq Siraj, owner of strand coffee shop, said no one has the right to use the pavement but the problem is really in the front space and yards around the building. He added: "How can the municipality convince me that I am violating the regulations but if I pay the fees they request I am no longer in violation." He contested Dr. Abbadi's statement that all businesses should be treated equally, noting that a falafel sandwich cost 110 fils everywhere but rents are not the same everywhere" (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq).

THE CIVIL Consumer Corporation lowered prices on 170 items at all its 30 branches. The reduction in prices range between 10 to 65 per cent (Al Ra'i).

ELECTRIC ENERGY generated from Al Rishah gas field accounts for only 18 per cent of the total electric power needed for the country, (Al Ra'i).

UNDER AN agreement signed between the Rafia Industrial Company (RIC) and an Iraqi government institution, RIC started exporting four million plastic bags to Baghdad at a cost of \$860,000 (Al Aswaq).

TO ENCOURAGE using safer and less-polluting cars, the Cabinet decided to exempt general safety and anti-pollution equipment in cars from customs tariffs (Al Aswaq).

Market turmoil slashes income of Arab Gulf investment firm

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Turbulence in world financial markets slashed the earnings of the biggest joint Gulf investment venture by more than half in 1994 despite a growth in overall assets, the company said Tuesday. The Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC), owned by the governments of the six GCC states, said it still made cash dividends for shareholders despite the decline in net profits. Net income plummeted to \$62.2 million in 1994 from \$128.5 million in 1993 and around \$80.8 million in 1992, the Kuwaiti-based company said in a statement sent to AFP from Riyadh, where the GCC finance ministers approved its 1994 balance sheet Monday.

The ministers, who make up the board of directors, also endorsed a general assembly recommendation for a cash dividend of \$37.5 million compared to as high as \$60 million in 1993, the

statement said. "Although well below the performance in 1993, the profits were achieved against the backdrop of exceptional turbulence in international markets," said Kuwaiti Finance Minister Naser Al Rodhan, GIC chairman.

"This performance in a difficult operating environment demonstrates the group's diversity of earnings stream and its ability to remain reasonably profitable at all points in the economic cycle, while at the same time supporting economic development and private enterprise in the Gulf region," he added.

The GIC, owned equally by the six GCC states, offers a wide range of financial services in the areas of investment banking, commercial banking and global markets. It also invests in projects in the region through other firms.

But most of its assets are based abroad, mainly the

West and South East Asia in stocks, bonds and bank deposits.

Bankers estimate total GCC overseas assets at more than \$400 billion, most of which was invested during the oil boom 15 years ago.

A world stock market crash in 1987 inflicted a loss of more than \$25 billion on the six members while their income from overseas investment sharply fluctuated in the following years due to unstable U.S. dollar and interest rates.

Mitsubishi, Bank of Tokyo to merge into world's biggest bank

TOKYO (R) — Two of Japan's elite financial institutions, Mitsubishi Bank Ltd and Bank of Tokyo Ltd, said Tuesday they had reached a basic agreement to merge into the world's biggest bank.

The merger would create a formidable financial player and step up pressure on rivals in danger of being left behind, industry analysts said after initial reports — denied by bank spokesmen — joined Japanese financial markets.

"In the last several years, financial markets in the world and Japan have been changing rapidly. Coping with this was a major reason for seeking the merger," Bank of Tokyo (BOT) President Tasuku Takagaki told a news conference.

Mitsubishi is Japan's third largest commercial bank in terms of deposits and BOT is the 10th largest.

A marriage between the two banks — rumoured for

years — would create the world's biggest bank with assets of over 72 trillion yen (\$808 billion), outstripping currently top-ranking Sakura Bank Ltd, which has assets of over 53 trillion yen (\$595 billion), financial analysts said.

"They're both in pretty good shape, and this would create a formidable bank," said David Threadgold, analyst at Barclays de Zoete Wedd Securities (Japan).

Other analysts echoed that view.

"Mitsubishi has a very strong corporate culture, a very strong domestic franchise, and is backed up by the huge Mitsubishi Group. But internationally, it is not that strong," said Brian Waterhouse, financial analyst at brokerage James Capel in Tokyo.

"BOT is one of the elite international banks but weak domestically, and has been looking around for a domestic base," he added.

Details of the merger have yet to be decided, but Mitsubishi President Tsuneo Wakai said Mitsubishi would like the merger to take place in April 1996 at the latest.

Analysts said the corporate cultures of the two were a good fit. "In terms of culture, background and pedigree they're closer than anyone except IBJ (Industrial Bank of Japan Ltd)," said Alicia Ogawa, financial analyst at Salomon Brothers Asia.

"Everybody else lives on the other side of the tracks," she added.

Mr. Waterhouse said, however, that there was some question over whether the management of the new bank could successfully bring the two operations together.

"It would be creating a powerhouse at home and a powerhouse internationally, but would the management of that powerhouse be up to it? — it is a question," he said.

BOT is chaired by former Vice Finance Minister Toyoo Gyoten, a dapper figure well-known in international financial circles. Its president, Mr. Takagaki, was said to be a keen proponent of the merger.

Analysts also said the merger would widen the gap among strong and weak banks and boost pressure on those struggling to write off

heaps of bad debt left from the bursting of Japan's 1980s "bubble" economy of soaring land and share prices.

Both BOT and Mitsubishi, which is the only Japanese bank listed on the New York Stock Exchange, have made good progress in writing off their bad debt, analysts said.

"It is becoming clear that the weak ones are increasingly being left behind," said Takehito Yamanaka, analyst at New Japan Research Institute.

The merger, Mr. Yamanaka added, would increase pressure on rivals such as Sanwa Bank Ltd, Fuji Bank Ltd and Sumitomo Bank Ltd, which are aiming to become "universal banks."

"They will have to do something such as link up with someone or speed up their write-offs of bad loans," he said. But he added that merger options for most other banks were limited because their areas of business strength overlapped.

The battered Tokyo stock market welcomed initial reports of the planned merger and the key Nikkei share average ended up 585.48 points, or 3.64 per cent, at 16,681.73.

Some analysts said, however, that the market's reaction was overdone. "It's great news for Bank of Tokyo and certainly not bad news for Mitsubishi," Mr. Ogawa said. "But I don't think it means anything for the rest of the banking sector or that it's a sign officials will bail out anyone."

The merger will be the third major commercial bank merger this decade. In 1990 Mitsui Bank and Taiyo Kobe Bank merged into what is now Sakura Bank. A year later, Kyowa Bank and Saitama Bank merged into Asahi Bank.

Mitsubishi posted operating profits of 130.2 billion yen (\$1.46 billion) in the six months to Sept. 30, 1994, down 6.5 per cent from the previous year. Last year, it took a majority stake in killing Nippon Trust Bank Ltd, the first such takeover by a commercial bank.

BOT posted half-year operating profits of 92.8 billion yen (\$1.04 billion), up 3.7 per cent.

Mitsubishi had 15,943 employees as of last March while BOT had 8,517.

Financial Markets

In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar to International Markets

Currency	New York Close 27/3/95	Tokyo Close 28/3/95
Swiss Franc	1.5064	1.6091**
Deutsche Mark	1.4058	1.4050
Swiss Franc	1.1597	1.1590**
French Franc	4.9490	4.9455**
Japanese Yen	89.41	89.58
European Currency Unit	1.3015	1.3026**

* USDC not available
** European Opening at 08:00 AM GMT

Summary of International Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	5.87	6.00	6.12	6.43
Swiss Franc	6.06	6.15	6.25	7.31
Deutsche Mark	4.42	4.75	4.81	5.06
Swiss Franc	3.37	3.37	3.56	3.68
French Franc	7.56	7.56	7.31	7.06
Japanese Yen	2.08	1.87	1.87	1.81
European Currency Unit	6.68	6.75	7.00	7.00

Source: Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

President Metals

Metal	USDC	JDC	Metal	USDC	JDC
Gold	382.75	7.60	Silver	4.65	0.110

* 100 Grams

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 28/3/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6890	0.6910
Swiss Franc	1.1000	1.1055
Deutsche Mark	0.4988	0.4982
Swiss Franc	0.5926	0.5966
French Franc	0.1391	0.1398
Japanese Yen	0.7684	0.7782
Dutch Guilder	0.4371	0.4393
Swedish Krona	0.0000	0.0000
Italian Lira	0.0405	0.0407
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8120	1.8240
Lebanese Lira	0.01675	0.016850
Saudi Riyal	0.1834	0.1843
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.3100	0.3600
Qatari Riyal	0.1880	0.1895
Egyptian Pound	0.1900	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7810	1.7900
UAE Dirham	0.1870	0.1880
Greek Drachma	0.2625	0.3550
Cypriot Pound	1.4460	1.5370

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	Canadian dollar
1.4006/16	Deutsche marks
1.4000/10	Dutch guilders
1.5680/90	Swiss francs
1.1540/50	Belgian francs
28.82/86	French francs
4.9345/95	Italian lire
1697.2/2.2	Japanese yen
89.20/30	Swedish crowns
7.2950/50	Norwegian crowns
6.2340/90	Danish crowns
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Al Wihdat's team

Wihdat leave today on historic visit to Bethlehem

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Soccer League champions Al Wihdat will go down in the country's sports archives as the first Jordanian team to visit the occupied territories since 1967 when they leave Amman for Bethlehem Wednesday on an invitation from Shabab Al Khalil Club.

During their 10-day visit Al Wihdat are scheduled to play five matches in Hebron, Jericho, Nablus, Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

During a recent visit to Amman, the host club's officials said sports fans and officials in the occupied territories were enthusiastic about the momentous visit of the first Arab team to Gaza and the West Bank, and that celebrations and a busy schedule awaited Al Wihdat's delegation.

The hosts also added that the team was also scheduled to meet PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat when the delegation visits the Gaza Strip on April 7.

Al Wihdat were crowned Jordan's soccer champions after finishing last season with only one defeat. They group a host of top players including Isam Mahmoud, Naser Ghandour, Abdullah Abu Zame'h, Jamal Mahmoud, Hisham and Jihad Abdul Mun'em, Marwan Al Shamali, Ali Juma', Yousef

Al Ammouri and Samir Bahloz. The team also includes, Ma'ad Rahhal, Faisal Suleiman, Sufyan Abdullah, Mohammad Mashini, Hamdi Zaghboun, Jalal Naim, Khaled Majdalawi, Othman Barhoumeh, Alaudin Saleh, Adnan Tawil, Mohammad Afif, Munir Abu Hantash and Haitham Smrein.

Established in 1943, Shabab Al Khalil were the first Palestinian team to visit Jordan in 1978 when they played Al Faisali, Al Ahli and Al Ramtha. They were also the first Palestinian team to play in Europe in 1983.

Schedule of Al Wihdat's matches

Hebron: Friday 31/3 Wihdat vs. Shabab Al Khalil
Jericho: Sunday 4/2 Wihdat vs. Hilal and Shabab Nablus: Tuesday 4/4 Wihdat vs. Nablus Clubs
Gaza: Friday 7/4 Wihdat vs. Gaza Clubs
Jerusalem: Sunday 9/4 Wihdat vs. Jerusalem Clubs.



Steffi Graf

Graf falls just short of No. 1

MIAMI (AFP) — Germany's Steffi Graf moved within just one point of Spain's Arantxa Sanchez in the battle for world number-one status after winning the Lipton Championships at the weekend.

WTA rankings released here Monday show Graf with an average of 298.82 points compared to 299.44 to Sanchez.

Japan's Kimiko Date rose one place to eighth following her run to the finals.

Date's compatriot Naoko Sawamatsu, Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia's Iva Majoli, Julie Halard of France and Judith Wiesner of Austria also rose one place.

1. Arantxa Sanchez	299.44
2. Steffi Graf	298.82
3. Mary Pierce	221.95
4. Conchita Martinez	185.30
5. Jana Novotna	174.57
6. Lindsay Davenport	164.28
7. Gabriela Sabatini	137.57
8. Kimiko Date	128.67
9. Natasha Zvereva	111.06
10. Magdalena Maleeva	108.34
11. Anke Huber	103.43
12. Iva Majoli	95.56
13. Mary Jo Fernandez	94.78
14. Naoko Sawamatsu	88.42
15. Brenda Schultz	76.27
16. Amy Frazier	71.42
17. Lori McNeil	68.36
18. Julie Halard	67.13
19. Judith Wiesner	64.83
20. Amanda Coetzer	61.97

Davis Cup Security men gear up for Sampras and Co

PALERMO, Sicily (AFP) — Ultra-tight security surrounds the top seeded United States tennis team here as they prepare for this weekend's Davis Cup quarter-final against Italy.

Up to 40 gun-toting police officers — 25 in uniform and the rest in plain clothes — have been detailed to shadow the visiting squad, which features world number one Pete Sampras and number two Andre Agassi.

The all-star pair arrived in the Sicilian capital Monday night on a private jet from London. They travelled from New York on Concorde after contesting Sunday's final of the Lipton Championships in Miami, won by Agassi in straight sets.

Police will escort the Americans on their daily commute from the five-star Villa Ignea Hotel overlooking the harbour to the tennis club, venue for the cup tie which starts on Friday.

In a city with a reputation for its Mafia violence, security for visiting celebrities is an everyday concern.

The American contingent has reserved 34 rooms on the second floor of the luxury hotel. The also have a suite for eating, massages and relaxing. On daily order from room service, 50 kilos of rice.

Sampras, who has been known to suffer from a delicate stomach on his foreign sorties, may not get to taste the famed Sicilian food.

Sampras and Agassi have put their rivalry for the top spot in world tennis on hold this week in order to join forces for the American team. Sampras leads the ATP Tour standings by just 227 points and when the two return to tournament play, the positions could easily change in April.

"Pete is not the enemy, you know," Agassi said about the relationship between the two stars. "I have a great amount of respect for him on a lot of levels."

"We've both played our whole lives for moments like this. We have one thing on our mind and that is to win the Davis Cup. We're going to do this together."

Playing for Italy at the 5,100-seat venue — three times as many tickets could have been sold had the Italian federation chosen a larger club such as Milan or Rome — will be world number 19 Andrea Gaudenzi and Renzo Furlan in the singles.

Stefano Pescosolido and Christian Brandi will take on the Australian Open champions, Jared Palmer and Richey Reneberg, in the doubles.

Agassi and Sampras were scheduled for a first hit on the slow red clay of Palermo tennis club later on Tuesday.

Will favourites' plans come through?

According to the form book, defending champions Sweden, last year's finalists Russia, the United States and Germany should all be safely



Pete Sampras

through to the semi-finals of the Davis Cup by next Monday — a repeat of the 1994 line-up.

The trouble is that when it comes to the men's team event, things don't always go according to plan.

Sweden, overwhelming favourites against modest Denmark, had to struggle for survival in the first round of this year's competition after losing both of the opening singles in Copenhagen.

And illness and injuries helped send experienced Australia, winners of the trophy on 26 occasions, crashing out to South Africa in Durban, while the 1992 champions Switzerland were toppled in Geneva by the Netherlands.

The new Swedish captain, Carl-Axel Hageskog, must have wondered what had gone wrong in his first outing with the titleholders in the Danish capital when first Jonas Bjorkman fell to Kenneth Carlsen and then former world number one Stefan Edberg suffered a humiliating four-sets defeat against 125th-ranked Frederik Fetterlein.

Hageskog certainly looked a very relieved man when Bjorkman clinched the tie with a thrilling five-set win over Fetterlein in the final singles — especially since the Swedish player at one stage trailed by two sets to one.

This weekend the Swedes enjoy home advantage when they face Austria in Vaxjo. But they will be taking nothing for granted against a team that dropped only four sets in a surprisingly one-sided 4-1 victory over Spain in Vienna.

In-form Magnus Larsson, who took eventual winner Andre Agassi through three tough sets in the semi-finals at Key Biscayne at the weekend, returns to take the top singles spot from Edberg for the first time. Larsson is currently ranked 14th — two places higher than the declining Edberg — and his presence in the team will enable Bjorkman to concentrate on the doubles alongside Jan Apell.

The Austrian hero against Spain was baseline powerhouse Thomas Muster who

won both his singles against Carlos Costa and Sergi Bruguera in straight sets.

Muster, who also gave Germany a scare in 1994 when he defeated Michael Stich in a five-and-a-half hour marathon, is again expected to be the main danger man against Sweden. But the Austrian number-two, Gilbert Schaller, also goes into the match full of confidence following his victory in the ATP's \$213,000 event in Casablanca on Sunday.

Russia, who dearly want a second bite of the cherry after their disappointing defeat in their first-ever appearance in the final of the competition last year, face South Africa in Moscow's Olympic Stadium.

Their exciting sixth-ranked player Yevgeny Kafelnikov will again be joined by Andrei Chesnokov, Alexander Volkov and Andrei Olhovskiy who lined up to complete the comfortable 4-1 first-round win over Belgium in Antwerp under new captain Anatoly Leshchenko.

The South Africans, whose only triumph in the event came in the form of a walk-over victory against India in the 1974 final, will plan their strategy around world number 11 Wayne Ferreira.

Ferreira has been the driving force which has led the country back into the World Group from the Euro-African Zone in 1992 after the years of political isolation. He has an excellent record in the event having been beaten only once in singles matches.

Tyson cannot escape rumors

NEW YORK (AFP) — Mike Tyson has enjoyed his first full days as a free man, but the former heavyweight boxing champion cannot escape rumors swirling about possible changes in his life.

U.S. and European newspaper reports claim Tyson is married, planning a break from promoter Don King and possibly fighting in London in

July. But there is little evidence to support any claims.

New York Newsday reported Tyson has married Monica Turner, his 28-year-old girlfriend. One version of the story had the ceremony taking place in prison, although officials at the Indiana Youth Centre said it did not happen there.

The Georgetown University

medical student was a frequent visitor during Tyson's prison term and was with him Sunday in Indianapolis.

Tyson's visit to a Muslim mosque Sunday could have included a wedding. Tyson spiritual advisor Muhammad Siddeeq said only that the fighter would not have considered such a move while he was a prisoner.

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Jordan National Wrestling Team off to the Acropolis Tournament

MUNIR SALLAQ, Ahmad Faez, Faid Nofal and Abed Al Hakim Yaqoub are off to Athens today to represent Jordan in the International Acropolis Tournament where 23 countries will be participating.

The tournament is one of the preparatory events for the World Championship in Czechoslovakia this September. The team will also be participating in the Asian Tournament in Iran this summer.

Munir Sallaq, ranking 2nd in the Middle East is an employee of the Forte Grand Amman where the team was hosted.

Ms. Jazz

Tom Hank
in
Forrest Gu

up
Co

out Pistons' Allan Houston (right) puts his arm out to stop Denver Nuggets Dale Ellis (left) during their NBA match (AFP photo)

Pistons, Jazz upset opponents

DETROIT (R) — David Robinson scored 10 of his 40 points in a key 12-0 run in the quarter to lead the San Antonio Spurs to their eighth straight win, 114-93 victory over the Detroit Pistons Sunday.

We got really sloppy after first quarter," said Robinson. All of a sudden it went to six. That's when I'd them, "we're going to give me the ball."

The Pistons took their only lead of the game by scoring first basket and pulled in 80-74 with 1:35 remaining in the third quarter. San Antonio and Robinson countered with 12-0 surge to take a commanding 92-74 lead with 10:39 to play.

San Antonio scored 24 points for the Pistons, who led to 2-8 in their last 10 games.

Indiana, Mark Jackson scored 10 of his 22 points in fourth quarter as the Pacers held off the New York Nets, 98-87.

Reggie Miller scored 25 points for the Pacers, who sitting atop the Central on 1 1/2 games ahead of Charlotte Hornets. Indiana won four straight games and is 10-2 in its last 12.

Denver, Reggie Miller scored 21 points and Ellis had five of his 16 points in a key third-quarter

run to send the Denver Nuggets to a 113-104 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers.

The Nuggets pulled within a half game of the Sacramento Kings for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference.

"I thought we didn't let them get easy shots," Williams said. "We got out running the ball break. We talked about defence and came out on them. We were a little tired but this is the NBA

and we've got to be ready to play."

At Utah, Karl Malone scored eight of his 23 points in a third-quarter run to lead the Utah Jazz to a 128-102 rout of the Washington Bullets.

The Jazz led, 64-59, at half-time and opened the third quarter with a 17-5 run, keyed by Malone's eight points, to take a commanding 81-64 advantage with 6:28 remaining.

RESULTS

San Antonio	114	Detroit	93
Indiana	98	New Jersey	87
Utah	128	Washington	102
Denver	113	L.A. Clippers	104

STANDINGS

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
X-Orlando	52	17	.754	—
X-New York	44	23	.657	7
Miami	27	42	.391	25
New Jersey	27	42	.391	25
Boston	26	42	.382	25 1/2
Philadelphia	18	50	.265	33 1/2
Washington	18	50	.265	33 1/2

Central Division

X-Indiana	44	25	.638	—
X-Charlotte	42	26	.618	1 1/2
Cleveland	38	30	.559	5 1/2
Chicago	36	33	.522	8
Atlanta	33	35	.485	10 1/2
Milwaukee	27	42	.391	17
Detroit	25	44	.362	19

Western Conference

Midwest Division

X-San Antonio	49	18	.731	1/2
X-Utah	51	19	.729	—
Houston	41	27	.603	9
Denver	33	36	.478	17 1/2
Dallas	29	37	.439	20
Minnesota	19	50	.275	31 1/2

Pacific Division

X-Phoenix	49	19	.721	—
X-Seattle	48	20	.706	1
L.A. Lakers	42	25	.627	6 1/2
Portland	36	31	.537	12 1/2
Sacramento	33	35	.485	16
Golden State	21	47	.309	28
L.A. Clippers	14	57	.197	36 1/2

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European Soccer Championship

France face Israel without Papin, Cantona

PARIS (AFP) — Davor Suker continues to put his national side on the map and himself in the shop window as Croatia, who visit Lithuania on Wednesday, emerge as a team to be feared.

The 27-year-old Seville star scored twice in a 4-0 European Championship win over Ukraine on Saturday as the former Yugoslavian state kept their 100 per cent record after four group four matches.

Added to his two goals for a 2-1 win in Italy in November, Suker has proven his striking ability on the big stage.

Inter Milan, Barcelona and Bayern Munich have all shown interest in the \$6 million rated striker. Sevilla signed him from Dynamo Zagreb in 1991 for \$2 million.

Apart from the Lithuania versus Croatia game, Wednesday sees 25 other European Championship matches.

In group one, France travel to Israel without influential players Jean-Pierre Papin and skipper Eric Cantona.

Papin, who scored in their 2-0 win in Azerbaijan after three goalless draws, is out on injury to his left knee. And Cantona has a worldwide ban after his "kung fu" kick at a Crystal Palace fan on January 25.

Paul Le Guen takes over the captain's armband in place of Cantona.

Third-place France trail Romania and Israel, who

sent France on their spirit-crushing journey to World Cup failure.

France led Israel 2-1 at the Parc des Princes in October 1993 with seven minutes to go. Even a draw would have almost certainly put them through to the World Cup finals.

But Eyal Berkovitz and Renoven Atar scored for a 3-2 Israel win, before Bulgaria finished France off when Emil Kostadinov scored in the dying seconds for a 2-1 win at the same venue.

Romania, who raised their world standing by beating Argentina and reaching the World Cup quarter-finals, host Poland in the group's other match.

Group leaders Romania, who include World Cup stars Gheorghe Hagi, Ilie Dumitrescu, and Florin Raducioiu, defend their 100 per cent record after four matches.

Spain, who play host to Belgium, are one of the few teams who have virtually qualified already. With maximum points from four games — including a 4-1 win in Belgium, their heaviest home defeat for 43 years — coach Javier Clemente can virtually bank on a finals place.

Yet should Clemente covet records, he will have the target of emulating France, who won all their qualifying matches before the 1992 competition.

Clemente has made one change buy calling up Tene-

ife's Argentine-born striker Juan Antonio Pizzi in place of Deportivo La Coruna striker Julio Salinas.

Belgium appear to be fading off the scene. Belgium, 1980 European championship runners-up and 1986 World Cup semi-finalists, risk failing to qualify for their third consecutive time in this event.

Belgium, already without keeper Michel Preud'homme and midfielder Franky Van Der Elst, who have both retired internationally, have lost playmaker Enzo Scifo and sweeper and captain Georges Grun through injury.

Denmark, who lost 3-0 in Spain in November, visit

Cyprus and a win would propel them above Macedonia into second spot behind Spain.

Switzerland's stars of today visit Hungary's heroes of yesterday in a group three battle. Switzerland, whose standing in the world game rocketed after reaching the 1994 World Cup second round, defend their 1938 and 1954 World Cup runners-up.

But Swiss striker Stephane Chapuisat was injured last month and is out for the rest of the season. The 25-year-old faces surgery after tearing knee ligaments training with Borussia Dortmund.

Second-placed Sweden,

still without Sweden's Tomas Brodin, who injured his left ankle in a 2-0 win over Hungary in November, travel to Turkey.

Coach Tommy Svensson picked seven players from European Cup quarter-finalists Gothenburg. Of those, Magnus Johansson is included for the first time and Anderlecht forward Par Zetterberg is also called up.

Italy put last November's home loss to Croatia behind them with a 4-1 win at home to Estonia on Saturday. Goals from Demetrio Albertini, Fabrizio Ravanelli and two from Gianfranco Zola put their qualifying chances back on route.

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♥ 8 5 2

♦ K Q 7 8 3 2

♣ A

EAST

♠ K 9 4 3 2

♥ 7 6

♦ 10 8 5 4

♣ A J 9

SOUTH

♠ Q 8 6

♥ A K J 9

♦ 5 4

♣ K J 10 2

The bidding:

North East South West

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass

3 ♠ Pass 3 NT Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: Five of ♣

How you manipulate a particular suit combination depends, more often than not, on how many tricks you need from it. For instance, what do you play to the second trick on this hand after you win West's opening lead with dummy's ace?

Note that North's bid of three spades could not be a genuine suit — with four spades, North would have introduced the suit at the one-level. With no slam aspirations and dis-

monds as a source of tricks, South placed the contract at three no trump and North saw no reason to overrule that decision.

West led a club, taken by dummy's ace. What now?

Most declarers needed five tricks from the diamond suit but the best chance would be to come to hand twice in hearts and lead diamonds up to the table's honor. But here declarer has five tricks in the side suits, so only four diamond tricks are needed.

One way to accomplish that could be to lead a high diamond to the second trick. That would set up four tricks in the suit but, unless the defense cooperates, there would be no way to take them. Since there is only one entry to the board — the ace of spades — East need only allow the king of diamonds to hold the first trick and the suit withers on the vine.

The secret is to force the defenders to win the first trick and there's a straightforward way to accomplish that. Declarer simply leads a low diamond from dummy at trick two. Now when declarer regains the lead, a diamond to the king sets up the suit while the ace of spades is still there for the entry.

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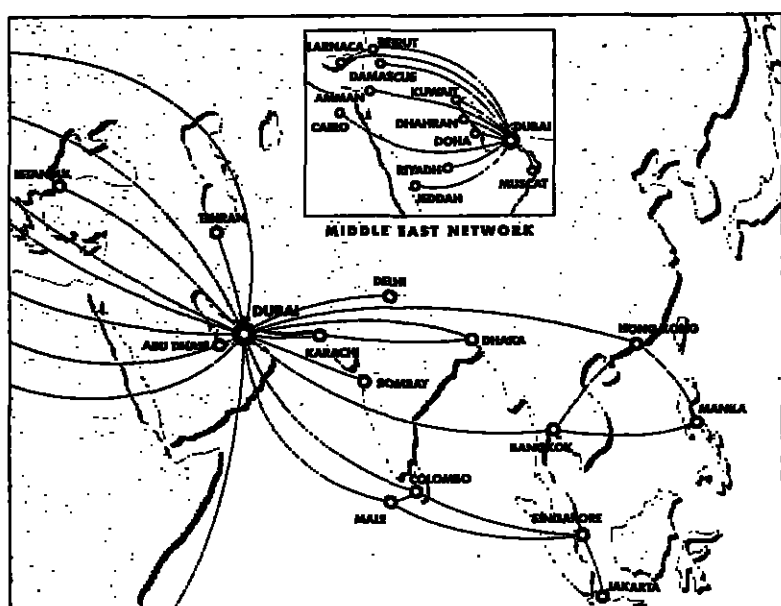
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in
When A Man Loves A Woman
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel.: 677420
CONCORD

CONCORD '1'
Comedian star: Adel Imam —
Bakht & Andadileh
Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00
CONCORD '2'
Jean-Claude Van Damme
STREET FIGHTER
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00

Cinema Tel.: 618274 - 618275
AMMOUN THEATRE

Musa Hijazin "Sum'a"
In the political satire
Hi Citizen
written and directed by
Mohammad Al Shawaqfa
daily on 8:30 p.m.
The theatre closes on Monday
— Haifa Al Agha in the
children's play
☆☆ Sa'di's Return ☆☆

Cinema Tel.: 675571
Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

Presents
Abu Awwad
In the social comedy
Punctured Bag
The theatre is closed on
Mondays
Tickets are available all
day

Cinema Tel.: 625155
AHLAN THEATRE

Presents:
The political satire:
AL SALAM YA SALAM
at 8:30 p.m.
For reservation, please call
625155
The theatre is closed
Saturdays & Sundays

NEWS IN BRIEF

Morocco sets up liaison office in Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Morocco has set up a liaison office in Tel Aviv to become the third Arab country to be represented in the Jewish state, Israeli officials revealed Tuesday. The mission run by three diplomats was set up 12 days ago in a rented apartment in an elegant Tel Aviv district that once housed Zaire's embassy. The official opening will be in a few days after final preparations. But the discreet opening contrasts with Israel's inauguration of its mission in Rabat in October attended by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres amid much pomp. Yitzhak Levanon, head of the North Africa department at the foreign ministry, welcomed the arrival of the Moroccan diplomats who are led by Talal Gofrani.

Gulf 'prince' arrested after high-life spree

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian police have caught a con-man who swindled his way into the Cairo jet-set by posing as a Gulf prince, a newspaper reported Tuesday. More than 30 large companies and businesses were taken in by the Egyptian who put on a false Gulf accent, said the Egyptian Gazette. He stayed in five-star hotels in the capital and in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria and spent other people's money extravagantly. Police discovered that the "prince," whose identity was not revealed, had stolen his car from a belly-dancer befriended at a party. The man had been arrested several times previously.

Iraq seized car of U.N. worker

KUWAIT (AP) — Iraqi police confiscated the car of a U.N.-contracted worker after he entered recently into a demilitarized zone on the Iraqi side of the border, a U.N. spokesman said Tuesday. But the man, who crossed the border six days after Iraqi police apprehended two Americans in the same area, was never detained because he had proper authorization, said the spokesman, Salim Fahmawi. He refused to identify the man further. U.S. television network NBC reported Monday that an American working for the United Nations was briefly detained on that day, March 19, for crossing the border illegally. "The matter was resolved on the spot," Mr. Fahmawi said, but added that the vehicle was confiscated because it had Kuwaiti licence plates. Only U.N. cars are allowed to move within the demilitarized zone on both sides of the border.

Ali Mahdi warns fighting may resume

DJIBOUTI (AFP) — North Mogadishu warlord Ali Mahdi Muhammad warned here Tuesday that inter-clan fighting could resume at the Somali capital's port and airport "at any moment." He was speaking after talks with Djibouti Prime Minister Barkat Gourad Hamad on the situation in Somalia since the withdrawal of U.N. troops early this month following an inconclusive two-year peace mission. The self-styled "president" will take his delegation on to Ethiopia and Sudan, two countries actively mediating in Somalia's clan warfare. He accused his rival, Mohammed Farah Aided, who controls most of south Mogadishu, of hampering all peace efforts.

Syria rebukes U.S. Senator Helms

DAMASCUS (AP) — Syria on Tuesday rebuked U.S. Senator Jesse Helms for accusing it of sponsoring terrorism and drug trafficking. The attack in the Tishrin government daily was an apparent response to a reported pledge by Mr. Helms, a right-wing North Carolina Republican who heads the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to oppose any peace agreement that involved U.S. financial aid to Syria. "There is not one reason that could justify Helms' hatred of Syria," the daily said. "Syria does not blackmail the American taxpayer, as Israel does, nor does it receive billions of dollars annually from the American treasury," it added. Israeli Labour Party lawmaker Avigdor Kahalani, who opposes withdrawal on the Golan Heights, relayed Mr. Helms' comments in a March 18 interview on Israeli army radio. "He thinks that Syrian President Hafez Al Assad can not be trusted, and he thinks that Syria is a country of drugs and terrorism," Mr. Kahalani said.

Weizman to visit Germany in September

BONN (AFP) — Israel's President Ezer Weizman will go to Germany for an official three-day visit in September, the German presidency said Tuesday, ending speculation he would take part in Bonn's celebrations in May of the fall of Nazism. A statement from the Israeli embassy in Bonn said the question of Mr. Weizman's participation in Bonn's May 8 celebration of the 50th anniversary of the fall of Nazism did not arise. Mr. Weizman will be in Israel on that date to take part in a number of ceremonies marking the anniversary of the end of war, the embassy statement said.

Sudan sees new era in ties with Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Sudan's Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohammad Taha looked forward Tuesday to turning a new page in Khartoum's stormy relations with Cairo after talks with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa. "This is a good start towards reaching an understanding and a good omen for turning a new page in relations between the two countries," Mr. Taha told reporters. Mr. Taha described as "positive" the meeting with Mr. Musa on the sidelines of a two-day session of the Organisation of African Unity. "Bilateral relations were discussed objectively and clearly as well as questions of concern to the Arab Nation," he added.

Ramos to seek clemency for Filipino in UAE

MANILA (AFP) — President Fidel Ramos is to appeal for clemency for a Filipino worker sentenced to die by firing squad in the United Arab Emirates for murder, sources at the Philippine foreign office said Tuesday. The sources, who asked not to be identified, said Mr. Ramos would write to UAE President Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan asking for a pardon for John Aquino, who was convicted in the 1989 stabbing death of Indian national Amerjet Lal Jaker Shand. The Philippine leader has also ordered full legal assistance to another Filipino being tried in the UAE for murdering her employer, who had allegedly raped her. The counsel for 16-year-old Sarah Balabagan informed the foreign office here he will invoke the "defense of life and honour" in a bid to gain her acquittal. Ms. Balabagan claimed she stabbed her Arab employer dead during a struggle after he had raped her in July 1994.

Britain to resume flights to Syria

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Britain is to resume flights to Syria next month after a nine-year suspension following a foiled bomb attack at London's Heathrow airport, the British embassy here said Tuesday. A delegation from British Airways and the Transport Ministry agreed to restore air links during a visit to Damascus last week, the embassy said. British Airways will operate two London-Damascus flights a week, while Syrian Arab Airlines will run four flights and British Mediterranean two.

20 drugs smugglers killed in clashes in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian security services have killed 20 drugs smugglers in clashes in northeastern Iran and seized 2,058 kilograms of opium, the official agency IRNA said Tuesday. Security forces told IRNA they had also seized a large amount of arms and ammunition in clashes in Torbat Heydarieh in Khorasan province, 90 kilometres east of Tehran close to the border with Afghanistan, over the past few days.

Regent meets U.S. general

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, on Tuesday received the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Central Command, General J.H. Binford Peay III, and reviewed with him bilateral relations and means of enhancing them. Prince Abdullah and Gen. Binford discussed scopes of military cooperation and exchange of expertise.

The audience was attended by His Majesty King Hussein's advisor Mohammad Rasoul Al



His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, on Tuesday receives Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Central Command (Petra photo). Kilani, the U.S. charge d'affaires and the U.S. military attaché in Amman. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Abdul

Hafez Mirai also received Gen. Binford and reviewed with him the situation in the region and the role played by the Jordanian Armed Forces in maintaining peace and security in various parts of the world. They also discussed scopes of bilateral cooperation

Israel not yet ready for Golan pledge

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Tuesday that Israel was not ready to tell Syria how far it is willing to withdraw on the Golan Heights.

"We have to leave ourselves room for bargaining," Mr. Peres told Israel Radio. "Because the problem isn't just a withdrawal, but the type of peace, along with security arrangements, a timetable and Lebanon as well."

Mr. Peres also dismissed a report that the United States made a secret promise to remove Syria from a blacklist of nations sponsoring "terrorism."

"I don't know of such a thing, but I certainly doubt the truth of this report," Mr. Peres said.

The Washington Times, quoting the Compass news service, earlier this week said President Bill Clinton paved the way for a renewal of the Israel-Syria talks by making such a promise to Syria.

Negotiations between Israel and Syria resumed ear-

lier this month after a three-month suspension. The negotiators are the Israeli and Syrian ambassadors to Washington.

Israel has called for higher-level talks, but Syrian President Hafez Al Assad has rejected the request. He wants Israel to declare its willingness to withdraw from all of the Golan before he agrees to a summit with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Israeli foreign ministry officials, meanwhile, said that if Syria is serious about making peace with Israel, it must stop its support for militants and hardline Palestinian groups.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has invited hardline Palestinians opposed to the peace process to settle in the autonomous Gaza Strip. Mr. Arafat's spokesman said Monday.

The statement by spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina followed a report by an Israeli foreign ministry official that the United States had informed Israel that Syria was

preparing to expel the heads of the hardline "rejection front."

"We say to these Palestinians that the (Palestinian) Authority is holding out a hand to them and we call on them to come and settle in Gaza to contribute to the building of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital," Mr. Rudeina said.

The Israeli foreign ministry official said, "Washington has the impression that the Syrian authorities have sent out signals to heads of organisations opposed to (Palestinian) autonomy that they should prepare to leave."

"But we remain cautious because this is only an American impression, it is still vague," he added.

Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam met recently with Palestinian opposition officials and a leader of the Lebanese Hizbollah to warn them that "their days in the Syrian capital are numbered," the daily Maariv wrote Monday.

However, two Syrian-based groups denied the re-

ports as "lies." Meanwhile, Syria accused Israel of making unacceptable demands and said there had been no progress in peace talks which resumed in Washington this month.

"How could progress be made while Israel wants to impose normalisation (of relations), ending of the boycott, opening of borders and other unjustified demands?" Syria's government daily said.

Al Thawra said Israel had made such proposals to Damascus while refusing to commit itself to full withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Talks between Syria's Washington Ambassador Walid Al Muallim and Israeli envoy Itamar Rabinovich resumed on March 20 with U.S. participation after a three-month break.

"Israel's policy and behaviour provide no encouragement for one to express the minimum level of optimism for progress," Al Thawra said.

Bahrain unrest continues

MANAMA (AP) — Students at a girls' school smashed windows and destroyed chairs Tuesday as anti-government protests flared again in Bahrain.

Overnight, agitators burned a small branch of the Bahrain Islamic Bank in Jidhafs, a densely-populated Muslim Shiite suburb where tension has remained high since two weeks of riots in December rocked this small island.

The disturbances have flared mainly in Shiite Muslim districts to press for the restoration of parliament and jobs for the 30,000 Bahrainis they estimate as unemployed, mainly impoverished Shiites.

Shiites make up about one-half of indigenous Bahrainis. About one-third of the island's 500,000 population are expatriates. The rest, like the ruling Al Khalifa family, belong to the Sunni sect.

The protesters, some of whom have called for the downfall of the Al Khalifas, also demand the release of detainees rounded up in scattered bouts of unrest over the past three months.

A statement from an opposition group, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, called on the International Committee of the Red Cross to check on "the inhumanitarian situation the detainees are living, and the brutal acts of torture."

The statement was faxed to the Associated Press in Cyprus.

Tuesday's disturbances at the Al Manama Secondary School for Girls in a Muslim Shiite area quickly abated, according to teachers at the school.

Residents in the distant Isa town suburb also reported brief demonstrations at a local girls' secondary school, but said the students had been stirred by boys who sneaked onto the premises before classes started.

Over the past days, small groups of high school boys have chanted anti-government slogans within earshot of the U.S. embassy or the criminal investigation department. They usually commit acts of vandalism and run off before riot police appear.

The Education Ministry prohibits police from entering any school premises, but small amounts of tear-gas have been fired from outside the gates.

More than 10,000 'Arab Afghans' are active — Jane's

LONDON (AFP) — Thousands of guerrillas, trained and hardened in the 15-year Afghan war, are fanning out across the Arab World and beyond as soldiers of fortune in a fundamentalist revolution, according to Jane's intelligence review.

More than 10,000 of these "Arab veterans of the Afghan war" are today active across North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, China and Kashmir, the Philippines and Tajikistan and the U.S. eastern seaboard, the London monthly says in its April edition.

Trained and armed with the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan, both by the West and Arab states, these "Muslim zealots" are likely to surface in "Islamic eruptions" anywhere, said Jane's.

It cited as examples last December's hijacking of an Air France Airbus at Algiers airport, and the February 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York.

Such attacks would likely have occurred "whether there had been Arab veterans of the Afghan war or not," said the review.

"But what is undeniable," it said, "is that these combat-experienced zealots have given the fundamentalists a powerful arm that they would not otherwise have had."

Jane's estimated that these "Afghan veterans" include 5,000 Saudis, 3,000 Yemenis, 2,000 Egyptians, 2,800 Algerians, 400 Tunisians, 370 Iraqis, 200 Libyans and scores of Jordanians.

Some 1,000 to 1,500 of 2,800 "Afghans" in Algeria, for example, "form the core of the hardline fundamentalists," said Jane's.

In particular, the Group Islamic Army (GIA), held responsible for killing scores of foreigners and Algerian intellectuals in and around Algiers, "is dominated by the 'Afghans'," said the reviewer.

Successful GIA leaders, including Tayeb Al Afghani, arrested in 1992, Sid Ahmad Mourad, killed by police in March 1994, and Abu Abdullah Ahmad, alias Sherif Gousmi, killed last September, were all "Afghan" war veterans, it said.

Of the approximately 2,000 "Afghans" in Egypt, several hundred are active in Islamic fundamentalist groups. One of the most influential, said Jane's, is Mohammad Shawkat Al Islambouli, brother of Khaled Al Islambouli, who was hanged in 1982 for his part in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, there are between 500 and 1,000 non-Bosnian Muslim fighters from a dozen countries. Some 300 of them are "Afghan" veterans with a Mujahedeen company operating alongside Bosnian army in Zenica, said Jane's.

It said Arab veterans of Afghanistan had also been identified fighting with seces-

sionist forces in Chechnya. The Chechen captain Grozny "became a key transit point for Arab veterans of the Soviet Union," said Jane's. "The Russians could well now become targets for the 'Afghans'."

Pakistan, under pressure from Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia and the United States, recently stepped up a drive to hunt down and expel the "Afghan" veterans, many of whom are fugitives in their homelands, said Jane's.

Last February, it said, Pakistani authorities arrested and extradited to the United States an Iraqi national, Ramzi Ahmad Yousef, charged in connection with the World Trade Centre bombing.

Many such fugitives, said Jane's, take temporary refuge in Iran, Sudan, the former South Yemen and in northern Iraq before "they are filtered out to other countries in the Arab World."

Abequa trial to start on April 3

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Trial of a Jordanian accused of killing his American wife in the United States and kidnapping his two children will start in Amman on April 3, a prosecutor said on Tuesday. Mohammad Abequa, also a naturalised U.S. citizen, was arrested in late July after he fled to Amman with his children Lisa, 6, and Sami, 3, following requests by Washington. He has remained in police custody since.

Mr. Abequa's wife, Turkish-born Nihal, was found dead on July 4 in the couple's New Jersey apartment.

The prosecutor general charged Mr. Abequa with premeditated murder and the transgression of the custody of juveniles, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The criminal court prosecutor, Ghazi Azar, told Petra that the defendant was questioned on the two charges and that after evidence was gathered in the case, the attorney general decided to refer the case to the prosecutor general.

He said after studying the case, the court's prosecutor general charged Mr. Abequa with premeditated murder.

Mr. Abequa will be tried before a three-judge tribunal. Mr. Azar said defendants in Jordanian courts enjoy all the guarantees to defence lawyers and if they were unable to pay for lawyers, the court appoints counsel whose expenses are paid by the Ministry of Justice.

If convicted, Mr. Abequa could face the death by hanging. Several American witnesses might travel to Jordan to testify.

COLUMN

Diana says she feels 'raped' by Paparazzi

LONDON (R) — Prince Diana, one of the world's most photographed women, says the Paparazzi hounding her on an Austrian holiday make her feel like she is being raped. "I just can't stand it," she told royal watcher James Whitely of Britain's Daily Mail while on holiday in the Austrian resort of Lech with sons Prince William, 12, Prince Harry, 10, "Mr. Taker, when I see the

around all the time it is like being raped," she is quoted as telling the paper in Tuesday's edition of leading tabloid. The prince told him: "Do you know when I go back to my each afternoon, all the dows of my apartment surrounded by photographs looking in at me? I feel like they are raping me. I feel like I am being raped."

But added: "They have no right to pursue me in the way I do. I will not let them away with it. I will resist it all the time." When a German photographer, Princess Diana angrily treated with him, saying: "Why are you following me alone?" She said sons have consistently stayed away from press cameras the nine-day holiday, saying they face with arms. Princess Diana estranged from her husband heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles, normally poses holiday with her sons in the hope that they will be left in peace to ski.

Beijing bans burning paper for the dead

BEIJING (R) — China has barred Beijing residents from burning paper money for the dead during this year's sweeping festival, when families traditionally honour ancestors, the Beijing Daily said Tuesday. Chinese custom holds that burning "banknotes" — along with an array of paper consumer goods such as gold ingots and luxury cars — in memorial to a deceased relative helps ensure a comfortable afterlife. Beijing's Communist leaders have banned the practice as a superstition and a waste of money.

The ban was intended to ensure safety in columbaria, eradicate feudalistic superstition, reform funeral customs, and promote the construction of a more civilised capital, it said. It gave no details of punishments for offenders of any fines caused by burning paper money. On the festival on April 5, Chinese are to tend the graves of the ancestors and make offerings of the food, drink and incense of the deceased enjoyed in life. Along with many other traditional customs, the practice has made a revival during years of economic reform.

Clinton has skin growths burned off

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton had several skin growths removed from his forehead and behind his ear that resulted from overexposure to the sun, White House said Monday. Spokesman Mike McRae said the growths, called keratosis, were not cancerous but could develop into cancer under some circumstances. They were burned off by touching them with nitrogen during Mr. Clinton's physical examination last day, he said.

Musical fax machines hit Britain

LONDON (R) — The but worthy office fax machine can now spew out musical scores from Beethoven to a new British music that delivers sheet music the touch of a button. Keying a few digits on a standard fax machine, users can select a song from a repertoire of popular classical scores and have it printed out in front of them. "Music by fax," said Tuesday, will initially 1,000 hit scores, from pop to jazz and from the entire Beethoven logue to the great classics.

Wound Kuwaiti

Three Kuwaiti and Iraqi soldiers were killed and 100 wounded in clashes in the Kuwaiti desert, the Iraqi Ministry of Defence said Tuesday. The ministry said the clashes were part of a series of attacks by Iraqi forces on Kuwaiti territory.

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